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Universities' funding model is broken, vice-chancellors warn

Exclusive Government urged to review current system of tuition fees

Sally Weale
Education correspondent

Vice-chancellors are warning that the current funding model for UK higher education is "broken" and have urged the government to review the system of tuition fees, which have been capped at about £9,000 for more than a decade.

In interviews with the Guardian they made clear that limits to overseas students announced last week on top of rising costs caused by inflation posed a serious risk to universities, which would require more funding from the government.

Under government proposals aimed at curbing net immigration, only overseas students on courses designated as research programmes, such as PhD students or research-led master's courses, will be able to bring dependants with them.

Universities have become increasingly dependent on fees from international students to prop up their finances, and vice-chancellors are waiting to find out the impact of the announcement on applications from abroad. There are fears that some universities could be squeezed between the plummeting value of domestic tuition fees and declining overseas recruitment.

According to Universities UK (UUK), which represents 140 higher education providers, the £9,000 tuition fee for UK students, which was introduced for English universities in 2012 and topped up to £9,250 five years later, is now worth just over £6,500 to universities.

Vice-chancellors know that any move to increase tuition fees would be politically unpalatable, but against a backdrop of high inflation and the cost of living crisis, higher education funding is forecast to drop to its lowest level in real terms since the 1990s, while the proportion of English universities reporting an annual deficit increased from 5% in 2015-16 to 32% in 2019-20, UUK says.

Prof Chris Husbands, the vice-chancellor of Sheffield Hallam University, said raising tuition fees might seem the 2 →



▲ *Soldiers of the 3rd Assault Brigade training in the Donetsk countryside for the counteroffensive*
PHOTOGRAPH: EMRE ÇAYLAK/THE GUARDIAN

'Fear is contagious, but so is courage' Ukraine readies counteroffensive

Julian Borger
Artem Mazhulin
Kramatorsk, Donetsk

A US-made armoured vehicle flying a large Ukrainian flag careered over a muddy field, coming to an abrupt halt by a treeline, its metal tracks churning up the sticky black soil.

Fire from its machine gun cut through the undergrowth, amputating branches, as the back door lowered, releasing a platoon of soldiers who ran into the trees firing, working through a system of hidden trenches until they were deemed to have been cleared.

The soldiers were from the first battalion of Ukraine's 3rd Assault Brigade, who had defended the town of Bakhmut for five months. Bakhmut fell days ago, seized by Russia at huge human cost, and now the brigade is preparing to fight back as part of a long-anticipated Ukrainian counteroffensive.

The officers and soldiers training in the Donetsk countryside are under no illusions about the task ahead. Once one platoon had performed the exercise, they got out of the vehicle and another platoon 22 →

Johnson hands over WhatsApp messages

Aubrey Allegretti
Senior political correspondent

Boris Johnson has handed a cache of WhatsApp messages and notebooks to the Cabinet Office, challenging it to release the documents in unredacted form to the Covid inquiry.

In a move that will pose a headache for the government, Johnson suggested Whitehall officials should "urgently disclose" the contents to the public inquiry. His provocation came as senior Tories urged the government to back down and avoid a protracted legal battle over the issue.

William Wragg, who chairs the Commons constitutional affairs committee, said the inquiry had "the powers and authority to request evidence it sees fit to consider".

Wragg added that the Cabinet Office should "comply with both the spirit and the letter of how the inquiry is constituted". 8 →

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News

CBI reveals proposals for reform in wake of sexual misconduct row

Anna Isaac

Britain's most prominent business lobby group, the Confederation of British Industry, has put forward proposals to overhaul its culture and recruit a new president as it prepares for a confidence vote by members next week that will decide the organisation's future.

More than 50 of the CBI's highest-profile members left or suspended their relationship with the body after the Guardian revealed a series of sexual misconduct allegations, prompting the government and the Labour party to suspend engagement.

"I have my eyes wide open about what we need to learn," the group's new director general, Rain Newton-Smith, told the Guardian. "People need to know the code of conduct and we need to lay the foundations for a strong speak-up environment."

As part of its drive for change, the group has accelerated its search for a new president. The incumbent, Brian McBride, will hand over responsibilities in January after overseeing a range of changes from the board downward.

In the foreword to a prospectus published by the CBI yesterday, he told members: "We are all chastened by the events of the past 12 weeks."

The allegations that prompted the cultural overhaul include rape, sexual misconduct and drug-taking.

"Whilst striving to represent and support our members to the highest standards, we simultaneously underestimated the daily effort required to maintain a great culture and the operational excellence of a growing CBI," the outgoing president said in the prospectus. "The consequences of that failure, you already know. We share a deep sense of responsibility to put things right."

Ffion Hague, an expert in board evaluation, has been asked by the CBI to lead an external examination of its processes. Hague has advised boards of companies including the mining firm Rio Tinto and the retailer M&S, according to her website.

The CBI said it would create a culture advisory committee and improve "listening channels with staff".

The prospectus sets out Newton-Smith's pitch to members, who will give their verdict in a confidence vote, with the results due to be announced after a crunch meeting on 6 June. Voting opened at 11am yesterday and will run into next week. The resolution, published yesterday, asks: "Do the changes we have made – and the commitments we have set out – to reform our governance, culture and purpose give you the confidence you need to support the CBI?"

Businesses that have suspended their membership, rather than terminated it, will still be able to take part in the poll.

The plan follows an open letter to members in April in which McBride conceded the organisation had "failed to filter out culturally toxic people during the hiring process".

A number of employees who were suspended after an investigation by Fox Williams have now left the CBI.

Tony Danker was dismissed as director general in April. He was the subject of separate complaints of workplace misconduct, unrelated to the sexual assault and rape claims. He has apologised in relation to some of the complaints and contested others.

An ethics consultancy, Principia Advisory, was asked to review the CBI's culture.

"Principia do not find that blanket descriptions such as 'toxic' or 'misogynistic' are accurate or useful descriptions of CBI culture," it said, but added: "Attitudes towards culture are inconsistent, with a lack of awareness of different experiences and limited self-reflection."

It also found "staff do not feel confident speaking up when they experience or observe misconduct".

Sources close to the CBI said that while women had been among those worst affected by misconduct, its new processes needed to consider reform regardless of gender and race.

The sources said that it would take time to build trust and confidence for internal reporting processes for any complaints. The CBI plans to keep on external support to handle any concerns staff might have, meanwhile.

"We are determined to learn the lessons needed and emerge from this as a stronger organisation, one that is able to share what we've learned with our wider society," Newton-Smith said in a statement yesterday.

Business Analysis *Page 29* →

Continued *from page 1*

University leaders urge government to review 'broken' funding model



▲ *The vice-chancellor of Sheffield Hallam said raising fees was the obvious solution, but was 'not the way to go for students'* PHOTOGRAPH: ALAN CURTIS/ALAMY

most obvious response but was not a sustainable solution to the problem.

"It's not the way to go for students. So the solution has got to be a hybrid public-private model, possibly based on a teaching grant for higher-cost subjects, underpinned by loans which could be set at the cost of teaching lower-cost subjects, plus a maintenance offer for poor students."

He went on: "This country has an outstanding university sector and the government – and opposition – need to get to grips with what makes this an outstanding university sector, and be prepared to take the decisions to keep that. Because if we don't make decisions in the best interests of the sector, then in four or five years' time we're going to be a lot weaker internationally. That's my big worry."

There are also fears that impending increases to employer contributions to the teachers' pension scheme, used by staff at 80 post-1992 universities, will add to the financial pressures on some more vulnerable institutions. Courses may have to be axed and staffing reduced.

Prof Charlie Jeffery, the vice-chancellor of the University of York, agreed the system was broken.

Jeffery said: "There is a growing recognition across all sides of parliament that the current system is now under real pressure. Inflation is driving up costs in a way that frankly we haven't seen.

"That of course impacts hard on the money we get for home undergraduate education, which is basically flat and has been for a decade. Most universities will now be losing money on teaching.

"That's a difficult place to be at the best of times, and it does require us to think of the other income streams that can help us achieve all of our objectives. By far the most significant one of those is international students. And therefore it adds to the pressure if you see changes in policy which might undermine the UK's attractiveness to international students."

Asked if it was time to look at the domestic tuition fee again, Jeffery said: "It is exactly the time to look at that question. I wouldn't pose it just in that way, because there are different ways in which you can finance higher education.

"One answer could be, reflecting the importance of universities to the economy in various ways – you actually put in more public funding and don't put it all on the individual shoulders."

There are already concerns about the impact on students of changes to tuition fee loans, which come into force from September and will mean future graduates paying back their university debts earlier and for longer than any generation before them.

Under the new measures, the income threshold for repayment in England will drop from £27,295 to £25,000 and outstanding loans will be written off after 40 years instead of 30.

Prof Steve West, the vice-chancellor of the University of the West of England, said just 75-80% of the cost of research was covered by funding. "So you've got a perfect storm, where you're losing money on home tuition and you're losing money on research."

Asked about revisiting tuition fees, he said: "I think it's difficult running towards an election because at the moment it's not a doorstep issue and no political party wants to make it one." He added: "In the absence of any increase in domestic fees, we will continue to see deterioration in the sustainability of institutions, and the less attractive we are to international students, we make it even harder."

West said he did not think a wholesale shift in the funding model was possible, but instead spoke of a tweaking of the current model.

Tim Bradshaw, the chief executive of the Russell Group of universities, said: "Universities will always work to run as efficiently as possible so they can continue to deliver the best possible student experience.

"However, as costs rise and deficits grow, universities' ability to mitigate the impact on quality and choice for students is limited. That is why we are calling for a more sustainable approach to funding higher education that is fair and affordable for students and the taxpayer and protects the pipeline of skills to support innovation and economic growth."

A Department for Education spokesperson said universities were independent from the government. "This means that universities decide their business models and oversee issues such as admissions, staff recruitment and pay.

"To support our world-class higher education sector, we're providing £750m of extra funding over three years to support universities to invest in world-class facilities and offer more high-quality courses, supported by our taxpayer-backed student finance system.

"We are hugely proud to have met our international student recruitment ambition two years running by attracting over 600,000 international students. As we made clear in the recent update of the international education strategy, the sustainable recruitment of international students remains a priority."



Anna Wintour, centre, and expected guests at the London event: Naomi Campbell, Sir Ian McKellen, Sadiq Khan and Michaela Coel
PHOTOGRAPHS: SHUTTERSTOCK, GETTY, REUTERS

Vogue's Anna Wintour plans London's answer to Met Gala

Morwenna Ferrier
Fashion and lifestyle editor

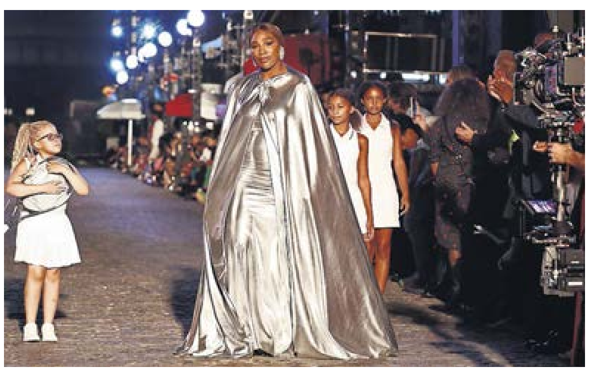
In a merger of fashion catwalk and West End theatrics, Vogue's editor-in-chief, Anna Wintour, is planning a philanthropic arts extravaganza that she hopes will take over the world "in the way the Met Gala did" – while raising money for London's struggling arts scene.

Featuring Naomi Campbell, Stormzy and Michaela Coel, with the mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, and the actor Sir Ian McKellen, the evening event will take place at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane, and include a red carpet outside, a catwalk show within, and live performances overseen by the director Stephen Daldry.

The show, details of which are otherwise under wraps, will last under an hour. But unlike most fashion shows, it will be ticketed and open to the public, with all proceeds going to performing arts organisations in the capital, including the National Theatre, Royal Opera House and Rambert dance company.

The rapper Lil Nas X attends the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute benefit gala on 1 May in New York
PHOTOGRAPH: EVAN AGOSTINI/INVISION/AP





Serena Williams opens the inaugural Vogue World: New York in the city's Meatpacking District last September
PHOTOGRAPH: JP YIM/GETTY/VOGUE

Wintour said she had been prompted to donate profits after hearing of budget cuts last November. "I read with dismay about the amount of cuts that were happening around the performing arts," she said. "The creative talent in London is unparalleled, so anything we can do to support all those creatively brilliant people, we'll do," she said.

The editor-in-chief of British Vogue, Edward Enninful, agreed, citing "the post-Covid recovery and long term health of the arts" as a catalyst in a statement to the Guardian.

Wintour is considered the most powerful woman in fashion, and has form when it comes to arts philanthropy. In May she oversaw the Met Gala's black tie annual fundraiser in New York. The event, which also marks the opening of the Metropolitan Museum's Costume Institute exhibition, tends to drum up more coverage for its red carpet surprises and five-figure ticket prices. But the Costume Institute is the only one of the Met's curatorial departments that has to fund itself.

Wintour said that philanthropy was not "the only solution – but it is a solution, certainly". British Vogue's features director, Giles Hattersley, said: "Ultimately, a solution would be at a political level, but Vogue has an enormous power in this space."

While both described Khan's input as pivotal, Rishi Sunak is not involved. "We haven't had that conversation so far," Hattersley said.

The Vogue event will be held in September before London fashion week. The city's fashion scene has suffered since the pandemic, with banner names including Alexander McQueen, Stella McCartney and Victoria Beckham moving their shows to Paris, creating a noticeably truncated London schedule.

"Obviously that was on our minds, too," Wintour said. "We wanted to put a spotlight on the fashion shows. We are incredibly supportive of the talent in London."

But, she insisted, this was as much about theatre and tourism as it was fashion. "It's why so many people go to London," she added. Mark Guiducci, US Vogue's creative editorial director, added that this was the purpose of the magazine. "Fashion doesn't exist in a vacuum," he said. "It needs a cultural context, and that's what Vogue does."

Wintour said she wanted the event to be inclusive and open to all, and some tickets – which start at £150 – will be given free to students. "We're inviting students, we are trying to make it as welcoming as we can." It will also be livestreamed.

The show follows last September's inaugural version, which took over a cobbled street in New York's Meatpacking District, and opened with Serena Williams in a floor-length silver gown.

"We made the decision that as we were emerging from Covid that we wanted to do something that was not only supporting the fashion industry, but also the restaurant industry, the arts – life in general," Wintour said. Like London, it was a response to the financial impact of the pandemic on the city's wider culture.

"I think, post-Covid, everyone just loves a live event," said Wintour, who has been global chief content officer for Condé Nast since 2020. "It is important to us to be seen as global." To that end, it will be livestreamed around the world, and next year, the plan is to take it to a major European city – most likely Milan or Paris – before moving to an Asian capital.

As a British-born journalist and editor living abroad, Wintour said she had a particular fondness for London theatre, and came back "as often as I can". Asked if she will ever return to London, she said: "Mark [Guiducci] has already moved to London – and I'm not far behind."

Books flying off the shelves as sales soar in cost of living crisis

Sarah Butler

The cost of living crisis is turning people back into bookworms as they seek out more affordable forms of entertainment, according to a leading publishing house.

Bloomsbury Publishing, the home of Harry Potter, has revealed a rise in annual sales and claimed the uptick in business was coming from readers whose finances were squeezed.

Sales of children's books rose 17%, led by a 51% jump in sales of the hit author Sarah J Maas, whose latest work in her Crescent City fantasy series, House of Sky and Breath, was published in February last year.

The child wizard also continues to be popular, with Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, originally published in 1997, the third bestselling children's book of the year.

Adult book sales also rose by 5%, with bestsellers including A Day of Fallen Night by Samantha Shannon, Stolen Focus by Johann Hari and Bake by the Great British Bake Off presenter Paul Hollywood.

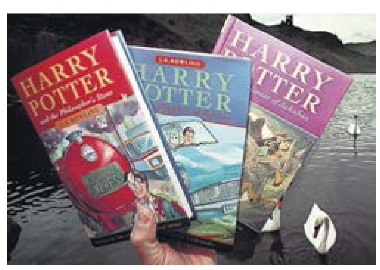
The group reported a 15% total rise in sales to £264.1m, including 9% before acquisitions of new businesses, and a 14% increase in pretax profits to £25.4m during the year to 28 February.

Bloomsbury's figures are in contrast to the fortunes of streaming services, which have suffered as Britons have culled their subscriptions during the cost of living crisis.

Nigel Newton, the chief executive of Bloomsbury, said: "In challenging economic times, readers are turning to books as affordable as they cut back on more expensive forms of diversion."

The company attributed the uplift to its strategy of publishing titles for both the consumer and academic markets and to grow through digital as well as physical markets.

Revenues from academic and professional books jumped 28% to £76m, driven by a growing number of digital readers.



Sales of children's books, such as the Harry Potter series, rose by 17%

The increase in sales at Bloomsbury is the latest evidence of a revival in physical book sales since the pandemic, when more time spent at home developed a new generation of readers. The change in culture led to independent bookshops in the UK and Ireland climbing to a 10-year high of 1,072 in 2022 after six consecutive years of growth, according to the Booksellers Association.

The resurgence followed a 20-year decline in which bookshop numbers fell to 867 in 2016. TikTok users are also thought to be driving sales, especially among young people who share tips and reviews of titles on the social media platform.

Pyongyang vows to try again after inaugural spy satellite launch ends in failure



◀ *South Korea's defence ministry found what are presumed to be components of North Korea's failed spy satellite launch in the sea* PHOTOGRAPH: GETTY



▼ *Objects believed to be from the malfunctioning rocket were found after it went down about 125 miles from the island of Eocheongdo*

Justin McCurry
Tokyo

North Korea's first spy satellite launch ended in failure yesterday after its second stage malfunctioned, sending the projectile plunging into the sea, with the regime vowing to conduct another launch soon.

The launch sparked emergency warnings on the southern Japanese island of Okinawa and in the South Korean capital, Seoul, where the city briefly issued an evacuation warning in error. Both alerts were later lifted.

The new Chollima-1 satellite launch rocket failed because of instability in the engine and fuel system, the official Korean Central news agency said, adding that officials were working to verify the "grave defects" that caused the rocket to malfunction.

The launch was the nuclear-armed state's sixth satellite launch attempt and the first since 2016. It was supposed to send North Korea's first spy satellite into orbit.

The failed attempt is a setback to attempts by the North's leader, Kim Jong-un, to boost his military capabilities amid rising tensions with the US and South Korea. But after an unusually quick admission of failure, North Korean officials vowed to conduct a second launch as soon as possible, suggesting that Kim remains determined to expand his weapons arsenal and apply more pressure on Washington and Seoul.

The South Korean military said it had salvaged an object presumed to be part of the crashed rocket in waters 125 miles west of the south-western island of Eocheongdo. The defence ministry later released photographs of a white metal cylinder it described as a suspected rocket part.



▲ *An image of North Korea's leader, Kim Jong-un, appears on a TV screen in front of footage from the launch* PHOTOGRAPH: JUNG YEON-JE/AFP

South Korea's joint chiefs of staff said earlier it had detected the launch of what Pyongyang described as a military reconnaissance satellite from the Tongchang County area in the western province of North Pyongan in North Korea at about 6.29am, heading in a southerly direction. The military was analysing if the rocket and its payload may have broken up in midair or crashed after vanishing from the radar early, the Yonhap news agency reported.

"It is impressive when the North Korean regime actually admits failure, but it would be difficult to hide the fact of a satellite launch failure internationally, and the regime will likely offer a different narrative domestically," said Leif-Eric Easley, a professor at Ewha Womans University in Seoul. "This outcome also suggests that Pyongyang may stage another provocation soon, in part to make up for today's setback."

> ***'It is impressive when the North Korean regime actually admits failure, but it would be difficult to hide internationally'***
>
> **Leif-Eric Easley**
> *Ewha University, Seoul*

In Seoul, the quickly retracted evacuation alert caused panic and triggered calls on social media for the city's mayor, Oh Se-hoon, to resign.

"I was taking my two young children to a basement car park as advised, in shock," said a 37-year-old man who asked to be identified by his surname, Yoon. The alert had left him "speechless and outraged", he added. "Now no one is going to believe a real alarm, just like in the fable about the boy who cried wolf."

Oh defended the decision to issue the alert, saying the city had "judged that immediate action was necessary". He told reporters: "This emergency text may have been an overreaction but … there can be no compromise on safety."

The US "strongly condemned" yesterday's launch, which it said "involved technologies that are directly related" to North Korea's missile programme.

The launch "risks destabilising the security situation in the region and beyond", a national security council spokesman, Adam Hodge, said.

In a phone call, officials from the US, Japan and South Korea "strongly condemned" the launch, Japan's foreign ministry said. "The three countries will stay vigilant with high sense of urgency," the statement said.

The UN secretary general, António Guterres, also criticised Pyongyang's use of ballistic missile technology as being "contrary" to UN security council resolutions, his spokesman Stéphane Dujarric said in a statement.

Additional reporting **Agencies**

Amazon's main UK unit pays no corporation tax for second year

Sarah Butler

Amazon's main UK division has paid no corporation tax for the second year in a row after benefiting from tax credits on a chunk of its £1.6bn investment in infrastructure, including robotic equipment at its warehouses.

Amazon UK Services, which employs more than half of the group's UK workers, received a tax credit of £7.7m in the year to the end of December, according to accounts filed at Companies House, advance details of which were shared by Amazon with the Guardian.

The government's "super-deduction" scheme for businesses that invest in infrastructure was introduced by Rishi Sunak when he was chancellor. It allowed companies to offset 130% of investment spending on plant and machinery against profits for two years from April 2021. Amazon booked a credit of £1.13m in 2021 under the scheme.

It is understood that as a result, Amazon's main UK division paid no corporation tax, but other parts of the group's UK business did pay an undisclosed amount. Pre-tax profits at the main division rose about 9% to almost £222m in 2022 as sales rose by nearly 8% to £6.56bn.

Paul Monaghan, the chief executive of the Fair Tax Foundation, criticised Amazon for failing to disclose its total profits in the UK and the corporation tax paid on that despite calls for more transparency.

He said: "Over the last decade, Amazon has grown its market domination across the globe on the back of income that is largely untaxed, allowing it to unfairly undercut local businesses that take a more responsible approach.

"[Now] Amazon UK Services is not only not paying tax, but is being handed tax credits for investment that almost certainly would have happened anyway. Tax credits for old rope, if you will. These super-deductions have not only wiped out the corporation charge for the last two years but will likely do so again in 2023 and possibly 2024."

> **£7.7m**
> *Size of tax credit received by Amazon as a result of investing in infrastructure at its warehouses*

An Amazon spokesperson said: "Amazon UK Services is only a small part of our business, and when you look across all our UK companies we paid corporation tax last year. The reduction in tax for Amazon UK Services … is a result of our significant capital investments in the UK."

Amazon said it had paid £781m in total UK taxes, including business rates, employer's national insurance contributions and corporation tax, up from £648m a year before.

Amazon said that revenues, profits and taxes for the bulk of its UK business were recorded and paid in the UK.

Back in our heads
Kylie embraced by TikTok generation
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'It feels cynical'
Private schools react to Labour's VAT plan
Page 16

PM to promote UK as centre for global regulation of AI

Kiran Stacey

Rishi Sunak will tell Joe Biden next week that the UK should become a global hub for developing the international regulation of artificial intelligence.

The prime minister, who is seen to be rapidly shifting his position on the emerging technology, will go to Washington on 7 and 8 June for meetings with the US president, as well as members of Congress and business leaders.

Officials said Sunak intended to raise the issue of AI regulation and to call for Britain to play a leading role in coordinating the formulation of global guidelines for its use.

The government issued a white paper this year that spoke mainly of its benefits of the technology. But ministers are changing their stance, with experts warning that it could present an existential threat to humankind.

Last week, Sunak met four technology executives to discuss regulation. This week, he indicated that he was paying attention to a recent warning from 350 experts that AI should be taken as seriously as the threats posed by pandemics and nuclear war.

"AI clearly can bring massive benefits to the economy and society," he said. "But we need to make sure this is done in a way that is safe and secure. That's why I met last week with the CEOs of major AI companies to discuss what are the guardrails that we need to put in place, what's the type of regulation that should be put in place … to keep us safe.

Referring to this week's expert warning, he added: "People will be concerned by the reports that AI poses an existential risk like pandemics or nuclear wars - I want them to be reassured the government is looking very carefully at this."

But he also signalled that he wanted the UK to play a significant role in creating a set of global guardrails that would govern how countries around the world develop the technology.

Sunak said: "I think the UK can play a leadership role, because ultimately we're only going to grapple with this problem and solve it if we work together, not just with the companies, but with countries around the world."

> ***'We'll only solve this if we work with the companies and countries worldwide'***
>
> **Rishi Sunak**
> *Prime minister*

Sam Altman, chief executive of OpenAI, which created ChatGPT, has called for world leaders to establish a body equivalent to the International Atomic Energy Agency. Darren Jones, the Labour MP who chairs the business select committee, has urged Sunak to promote the UK as a potential host for such an organisation.

Government sources said the creation of a new international organisation was not a realistic option, but that they did want to play a role in coordinating the disparate regulatory efforts by European, Asian and American countries.

Experts say two broad categories of risk are created by AI. The first is the shorter-term risk of the technology being misused, perhaps to create disinformation. The longer-term concern relates to the prospect of AI becoming "sentient", which could start with the technology pursuing goals for which it has not been programmed.

Examples of the guardrails some industry figures are calling for include forcing developers to share information about the datasets that they use to train their AI programmes, or banning them from selling their products to certain people.



PHOTOGRAPH: GUY BELL/SHUTTERSTOCK

The new naturalism One of the pieces from the Webs of Life exhibition that opens today at the Serpentine South gallery in London. The Argentinian artist Tomás Saraceno's interactive sculptures aim to engage and accommodate local flora and fauna as well as the usual human art lovers.

Further rail strikes to hit passengers travelling to FA Cup final

Mabel Banfield-Nwachi

Rail services in parts of England came to a halt yesterday amid a fresh wave of train strikes, with planned industrial action tomorrow and Saturday affecting hundreds of thousands of people travelling for sporting events and concerts.

More than 12,000 members of Aslef, the drivers' union, began 24-hour strike action yesterday as part of the long-running dispute over pay and conditions.

Passengers travelling on Saturday, which is the day of the FA Cup final and the penultimate day of Beyoncé's Renaissance tour in the UK, will also face disruption as Aslef members strike. Members of the RMT union will strike tomorrow. Rail operators say services will be severely reduced.

Football fans travelling to London for the FA Cup final between Manchester City and Manchester United at Wembley Stadium on Saturday will face major disruptions.

No services will run on networks including Avanti West Coast, CrossCountry, Northern and Thameslink on Saturday. The Rail Delivery Group, which represents the train operating companies, said about 40% of trains would be running on Saturday, with wide regional variations.

The unions say they have not been given a pay offer they can recommend to their members. Aslef rejected the government's 4% offer, which it described as "risible" since train drivers have not had a pay rise for four years.

Mick Whelan, general secretary of Aslef, told the PA news agency "there are no negotiations" in the bitter dispute over pay and conditions.

On the RMT strike day tomorrow, about 50% of services will run. Aslef also starts an overtime ban today.

Rail operators said passengers could obtain refunds if their train was cancelled or rescheduled.

A Department for Transport spokesperson said: "These strikes have been coordinated by union leaders to disrupt passengers in a week which will see major events.

"Not content with impacting the hundreds of thousands of people who have looked forward to these events all year round, unions are also targeting their own members' pockets by forcing them to miss out on pay every time they strike.

"The government has facilitated a fair and reasonable pay offer, now union leaders must do the right thing and put this to their members."

Adventurers overcome heavy waves in attempt to stay 60 days on Rockall

Severin Carrell
Scotland editor

Three adventurers planning to live for up to 60 days on Rockall in the north Atlantic have made camp on the rock after a dramatic ascent in which one of the team was washed off the islet twice by heavy waves.

The adventurers, led by Cam Cameron, a Scottish teacher who hopes to beat the 45-day record for staying on Rockall, landed on the barren islet on Tuesday afternoon after a 420-mile voyage from the UK.

Their arrival on the rock, 230 miles west of North Uist, was confirmed by radio enthusiasts who were among the first to hear broadcasts from the team just after midnight.



Cameron and his colleagues Adrian "Nobby" Styles, a radio operator, and Emil Bergmann, a mountaineer, are broadcasting from Rockall for the next week to raise funds for British military charities.

Their ascent up the sheer granite was more hazardous than expected because the waves were far higher and larger than anticipated, Cameron, 53, told the Guardian.

A mountaineer from Bulgaria, Bergmann was the first to land, to fix lines needed for Cameron and Styles to follow. The swell was so great he was twice washed into the sea before clambering on at the third attempt.

Cameron said their yacht, the Taeping, made three passes of the 17-metre-high rock before they attempted a landing using rigid inflatable boats. All three men have had training in cold-water survival and rock climbing.

"It was difficult getting on because of the surf. The weather conditions were just about favourable but [it was] just the surf around the base of the rock," he said. "We had three attempts and got on on the fourth – it was extremely difficult."

Once they approached and Bergmann tried to clamber on, he said, "the swell was literally brushing him straight off the rock and he was gone. But he made it third time around."



◀ Cam Cameron at Inverkip marina in Scotland, before the expedition sailed for Rockall
PHOTOGRAPH: MURDO MACLEOD/ THE GUARDIAN

▲ Rockall, where the three men hope to make camp for longer than 45 days, to break a record and raise money for military charities

It had been thought the team began broadcasting from Rockall on Tuesday afternoon after a signal claiming to be from the islet was heard by other radio enthusiasts.

> *'We had three landing attempts and got on on the fourth'*
>
> **Cam Cameron**
> *Expedition leader*

That is now believed to have been a rogue message from someone impersonating the expedition.

More than 1,000 enthusiasts from around the world had made contact with Styles and Bergmann by yesterday morning. That will earn each of them a coveted and collectible document known as a QSL card that the expedition is selling for charity, which confirms the holder has successfully contacted Rockall.

The expedition sailed from Inverkip, on the Clyde, at the weekend and arrived off Rockall at about 7.30am on Tuesday. They passed the island of Arran before sailing around the Mull of Kintyre and then westwards past the southern Hebrides.

Cameron is hoping to beat the 45-day record set nearly 10 years ago by Nick Hancock, a surveyor from Ratho, near Edinburgh. Hancock had hoped to live there for 60 days but lost critical supplies in a storm.

He did surpass a record set by three Greenpeace activists in 1997, who lived on Rockall for 42 days to protest against suggestions the seabed could be drilled for oil.

The UK annexed Rockall in 1955, laying claim to rich fishing grounds and mineral rights. Ireland disputes ownership, as does Iceland, arguing that Rockall cannot sustain human habitation so cannot under international law be used to control surrounding seas.



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Jekyll's pioneering garden saved for the nation by National Trust

Harriet Sherwood

A garden created by the pioneering horticulturist Gertrude Jekyll that was the prototype of the contemporary English garden has been saved for the nation by the National Trust.

Munstead Wood near Godalming, Surrey, Jekyll's home and garden until her death in 1932, was acquired by the trust through a private sale with support from the government "in order to secure it for public enjoyment and benefit", the trust said.

The 4.5-hectare (11-acre) garden will now be assessed by National Trust experts before a programme of restoration of the grounds and house begins. It is not expected to open to the public for at least a year.

Munstead Wood is described as a "horticultural gem" surrounding an Arts and Crafts house designed by Edwin Lutyens.

Andy Jasper, the National Trust's head of gardens and parklands, said it was a "delicate and enchanting space" and a "beautiful Lutyens building". Speaking from Munstead Wood, he said: "The sun is reflecting on rhododendrons in full bloom and azaleas that are a key feature of this garden. The air is thick with their scent. I've just watched a fox walk in front of me."

Jekyll bought Munstead Wood in the 1880s, beginning work on the gardens before embarking on the house. She ran a garden centre there and bred many new plants.

She became one of the most influential garden designers and transformed horticultural practice, collecting plants in Britain and Europe and introducing many new varieties into British gardens.

Jekyll created some 400 gardens in the UK, Europe and America, collaborating with Lutyens on many projects. She wrote many books, contributed more than 1,000 articles to Country Life, the Garden and other magazines and was also a talented painter, photographer and craftswoman.

She and Ellen Willmott were the first women to be awarded the Royal Horticultural Society's Victoria Medal of Honour – the highest award for British horticulturists. "Before Jekyll, late Victorian gardens were formal, almost regimented places," Jasper said. "Jekyll started using plants like a painter would use a palette of oil paints. You start to see a sense of theatre and showmanship and delight."

Jekyll created areas "like a series of rooms" to flower in different seasons, "so there was always something to see. She really played with colour. She used very strong, bright colours in the foreground, and then more muted shades at the rear, to create a sort of foreshortening so you imagine the borders were much deeper than they were."

Some of Jekyll's original planting survives at Munstead Wood, particularly in the woodland garden, where her approach to artistic "wild gardening" is evident. The formal paths, walls and pond near the house remain intact and Jekyll's innovative rock garden was recently found buried under layers of garden debris.



▲ *Gertrude Jekyll, who died in 1932*

'Jekyll started using plants like a painter would use a palette of oil paints'

Andy Jasper
National Trust

In the 1950s the garden was simplified, but later owners of the property restored Jekyll's design and planting. The National Trust's restoration will be based on surviving documentary evidence, including photographs, planting plans, paintings and written descriptions.

Jasper said Munstead Wood was "a rare surviving example of Jekyll's work", adding: "It was the source of the planting experiments she described in her writing, the hub of her garden design and nursery business and had a huge influence on garden design and planting not just in Britain but internationally."

It showcased her "signature naturalistic design, her bold use of colour and innovative use of everyday plants. There is no greater example of a classic English garden."

Hilary McGrady, the National Trust's director-general, said the acquisition of Munstead Wood "offers an extraordinary chance to tell the story of the house and garden, and Jekyll's enormous impact, inspiring a new generation of gardeners and nature lovers.

"It's difficult to overstate the importance of this seminal garden."



▶ *A view of Gertrude Jekyll's former home, Munstead Wood, as seen from the woodland garden*
PHOTOGRAPHS: THE NATIONAL TRUST

Auction of Nazi memorabilia to go ahead despite outcry

Rory Carroll
Ireland correspondent

A Belfast auction house is going ahead with the sale of Adolf Hitler memorabilia despite an outcry.

Karl Bennett, the managing director of Bloomfield Auctions, yesterday denied that the sale was immoral.

A silver-plated pencil with the initials AH and a signed photograph of Hitler are among 10 Nazi-themed lots due to go under the hammer on Tuesday. Others include a silver serving tray, a fork and a porcelain jug purportedly from the dictator's dining tables. Believed to have been a gift from Hitler's partner, Eva Braun, for his 52nd birthday in 1941, the pencil is predicted to fetch £50,000-£80,000.

"All items are a part of history, and we shouldn't be writing history out of books or society," Bennett said in a statement. "In my experience those who buy such items are legitimate collectors who have a passion for history. We do not seek to cause hurt or distress to anyone or any part of society. All items have a story and tell of a particular time in history."

The chair of the European Jewish Association, Rabbi Menachem Margolin, asked Bennett to withdraw the items on moral grounds. "We simply cannot fathom how a love trinket such as an engraved pencil or a signed photograph constitutes a historical object of any inherent historical value," he said. The auction would perpetuate a macabre trade in Nazi-owned artefacts, he added.

"The defence from Munich to Maryland is the same: these items are of historical interest. They are anything but," he said. Buyers' motives were unknown, and trading in "metaphorically blood-soaked" items could glorify mass murder, said Margolin. "Their trade is an insult to the millions who perished, the few survivors left, and to Jews everywhere."

Oliver Sears, of Holocaust Awareness Ireland, told RTÉ: "There is only one reason to go ahead with the sale and that is to make money, regardless of the circumstances."

Countries including Austria and Germany ban the sale of Nazi items, while Christie's, Sotheby's and Bonhams auctioneers do not sell them. In 2019, Bloomfield cancelled the sale of swastika-emblazoned items, reportedly made for Hitler, after protests.



The silver-plated pencil reportedly given to Hitler

Man in 'body modification group' pleads guilty to freezing off leg

Emine Sinmaz and agency

A member of an alleged extreme body modification group has admitted freezing the leg of a man who is accused of carrying out castrations and broadcasting the footage on his "eunuch maker" website.

Jacob Crimi-Appleby, 22, from Epsom, Surrey, pleaded guilty yesterday to causing grievous bodily harm with intent in February 2019 to Marius Gustavson, who needed to have his leg amputated.

Gustavson is alleged to have been part of a conspiracy involving extreme modifications on 13 victims, the removal and trade of body parts and the uploading of videos. The procedures were allegedly filmed and uploaded to Gustavson's website, which subscribers paid to watch.

During a hearing at the Old Bailey, the 45-year-old, from Haringey, north London, pleaded not guilty to causing grievous bodily harm with intent to three men in 2018 and 2019. The charges relate to the clamping and splitting of the genitals of the men.

Two men have previously admitted removing other body parts from Gustavson. Nathan Arnold, 48, of west London, admitted the partial removal of his nipple and possessing extreme pornography. Damien Byrnes, 35, of north London, admitted removing Gustavson's penis.

Peter Wates, 66, from Croydon in south London, previously pleaded guilty to conspiracy to cause grievous bodily harm between 2016 and 2022. He is alleged to have been involved in nine of the 29 incidents.

A Romanian national, Ion Ciucur, 29, is said to have been involved in two incidents in the alleged conspiracy. Other alleged conspirators are David Carruthers, 60, Janus Atkin, 38, and Ashley Williams, 31, all from Newport.

The defendants are said to have been part of a society whose members willingly undergo extreme body modification. The practice is linked to a subculture in which men become "nullos" – genitally nullified – by having their penis and testicles removed.

Judge Mark Lucraft KC set a further plea and case management hearing for 30 June. A provisional trial of up to eight weeks has been set at the Old Bailey from 4 March next year.

Black people 'three times more likely to get Covid fines than white people'

Vikram Dodd

Penalties for breaking Covid rules were three times more likely to be handed to black people than white people and seven times more likely to be issued in poorer areas than richer ones, research commissioned for Britain's police chiefs reveals.

The study, covering England and Wales, showed racial disparities for every single force, with people from minority ethnic backgrounds in one area up to eight times more likely to be given the penalties.

The report was commissioned by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and conducted by academics at the University of Edinburgh. The NPCC did not publish the findings, to the surprise of those who produced the research.

The study looked at the period from 27 March 2020 to 31 May 2021, when 122,506 fixed penalty notices (FPNs) were issued. In England, people from ethnic minorities were on average more than twice as likely than white people to be fined, with the rate even higher for black people.

The study said: "In England, the rate of FPNs per 10,000 people from an ethnic minority background was 46.1, compared to 19.9 for white individuals, reflecting an ethnic disparity rate of 2.3. The ethnic disparity rate in England was highest for people from a black ethnic background, who were 3.2 times more likely to be issued with an FPN." In Wales, the ethnic disparity rate was 2.8 for people from ethnic minorities, and almost identical for black people.

The report's co-author Prof Susan McVie said: "There was not a single force area that did not have a higher disparity rate for ethnic minority groups."

In Warwickshire, people from ethnic minorities were 1.4 times more likely to be fined than white people, but in Cumbria it was 8.4 times. However, it may be tourists increased the Cumbria number because fines for its resident population showed a disparity rate of only 2.3 times. McVie said: "It is plausible [minority ethnic people] looked out of place as police may not have been used to seeing black or Asian faces in that area."

> *'It raises the question about the extent to which officer discretion may have led to conscious or unconscious bias'*
>
> Susan McVie
> *Report co-author*

The study found the highest rate of disparity was not for young minority ethnic people, who experience higher rates of stop and search powers, but middle-aged people over 45. McVie said: "It does raise the question about the extent to which officer discretion may have led to conscious or unconscious bias in policing practice."

Compared with their resident populations, people from ethnic minorities were five times more likely to be fined than white people in the West Midlands, and 1.7 times more likely in the Metropolitan police area covering London. Other data shows a big increase in stop and search by the Met during the first lockdown.

Last year, a University of Liverpool study of officers said bias could explain in part this ethnic disparity.

Andy George, the president of the National Black Police Association, said: "The research highlights yet again that policing has a systemic issue with racism which needs to be admitted and dealt with."

The study also found economic disparities. "In England, FPN recipients were 7.2 times more likely to be living in one of the 10% most deprived [areas] than one of the 10% least deprived [areas] during period one. This reduced to 3.9 in period two, before increasing again to 4.7 in period three."

McVie explained the change by saying: "People were scunnered [fed up] by their neighbours breaking the rules, so called the police."

The frequency of fines varied hugely among the 43 forces, each of which is operationally independent, with the NPCC trying to ensure a consistency of approach. In England the average rate was 20 fines per 10,000 of resident population, with the lowest rates in Humberside (7.1/10,000) and West Midlands (7.8), but rates seven times higher in Merseyside (47.9) and North Yorkshire (49.4).

Men were twice as likely to be fined as women, and overall half of all fines went to those aged 18 to 24 – four times their proportion of the population.

The NPCC lead for enforcing Covid rules, the assistant chief constable Owen Weatherill, said: "It is clearly a concern to see [an ethnic] disparity. But what the data is not able to show us is why these disparities exist. Each force will look at this data carefully to assess and mitigate any risks of bias – conscious or unconscious – and to minimise disproportionate impact in the future, wherever possible."



Johnson hands over his correspondence in challenge to Cabinet Office

Continued *from page 1*

Robert Buckland, a former justice secretary, instead called for a compromise "to avoid an ugly turf war". "There needs to be disclosure with agreed redactions," he said. "I support the government argument about the need for ministers and officials to work in a safe space but the inquiry has agreed terms of reference and is entitled to ask for material relevant to the ambit of its work."

As the pressure mounted, Cabinet Office officials were scrambling to respond to the Covid inquiry chair, Heather Hallett, by her deadline of 4pm today. She has demanded WhatsApp messages and notebooks from Johnson and texts from one of his No 10 aides, Henry Cook.

The government has been pushing back, in part because some senior figures fear more potential requests could follow concerning other ministers who are still in post.

It emerged this week the government had been in possession of Johnson's documents previously. But after officials looked through the files and decided they were not relevant to the inquiry, the Cabinet Office said it no longer had them.

Johnson claimed in a new statement yesterday that the Cabinet Office had had access to the material "for months". It is said that government officials and their lawyers had been invited to his offices to view the files on multiple occasions.

Further material was provided to the Cabinet Office this week, and Johnson's spokesperson said he was "perfectly happy for the inquiry to have access to this material in whatever form it requires".

They added he had cooperated with the inquiry in full and "looks forward to continuing" to do so.

Rishi Sunak was urged to confirm that the full documents would now be given to the inquiry. Angela Rayner, Labour's deputy leader, said the Cabinet Office had "run out of excuses" and should stop trying to "conceal the truth".

She added: "If other ministers are hoping to hide behind the same smoke and mirrors tactics to dodge public scrutiny by the inquiry, it is increasingly clear they don't have a leg to stand on."

Christine Jardine, of the Liberal Democrats, said: "He can't use Boris Johnson any more as an excuse to avoid handing over vital evidence. Bereaved families are still waiting for answers. They deserve so much better than yet another Conservative stitch-up."

Officials may be forced to challenge Hallett's ruling in the courts, given that they fear the issue is a litmus test and that handing over Johnson's files could mean other ministers would have to do so too. The possibility of judicial review was said to be increasingly likely, but taking legal action against the head of a public inquiry at such scale would be unprecedented.

Jonathan Jones, who is a former head of the government legal department, said officials should not refuse to share the documents just to save ministers' blushes.

Messages Johnson exchanged with about 40 people – including Sunak – have been requested by Hallett.

"I'm sure that it won't be at all surprising if some of this ministers would prefer not to disclose, because it's politically embarrassing or personally embarrassing," Jones said.

▼ The inquiry led by Lady Hallett is looking into the government's handling of the Covid pandemic
PHOTOGRAPH: MURDO MACLEOD/THE GUARDIAN



"That wouldn't be very surprising because you're talking about potentially a large amount of material, some of it on personal devices. But those are not reasons for withholding it. If it's relevant, it should be disclosed."

However, Robin Butler, a former cabinet secretary and head of the inquiry into intelligence about weapons of mass destruction, said he thought Hallett was being "pretty unreasonable".

He added: "When I did my inquiry on WMD and we had to winkle information out of the government, I followed the precedent of the Falklands inquiry and asked the permanent secretary of each department to give their personal undertaking that all information that was relevant would be released to us. That worked and subsequently I never discovered anything that wasn't released that should have been."

Stephen Reicher, a behavioural scientist who advised the government during the Covid pandemic, said the standoff was symptomatic of ministers' lack of understanding of the importance of trust.

"If there is anything that is more corrosive of trust than releasing information which shows rule-breaking, it is to be seen to try and hide information about rule-breaking," he said.

"It takes us for fools at two levels: the information that is being hidden and what is being hidden. What is more, once we have lost trust and we think of government as the 'other', as venal and corrupt, the blacked-out passages lead us to imagine unlimited transgressions which are probably worse than what did go on."

The Cabinet Office maintained it had already provided more than 55,000 documents, 24 personal witness statements and eight corporate statements to Hallett's inquiry.

It has argued: "We are firmly of the view that the inquiry does not have the power to request unambiguously irrelevant information that is beyond the scope of this investigation."



▲ The ex-PM challenged officials to pass on the unredacted documents

Analysis
Rowena Mason



If these messages are released uncensored, Sunak's fear is that others will be too

Why would ministers fight tooth and nail to prevent the release of Boris Johnson's uncensored WhatsApp messages and diaries, and the correspondence of a relatively anonymous former political aide called Henry Cook?

Rishi Sunak has little interest in protecting his rival from any embarrassment. His relationship with Johnson remains almost as strained as when they were neighbours in Downing Street, and Sunak is now reluctant even to pick up the phone to Johnson for a rapprochement. Johnson has also said he is willing for all his material to be sent to the inquiry uncensored – as has his former health secretary Matt Hancock.

However, the Sunak administration's battle to withhold the information is about far more than Johnson, despite the former prime minister's domination of the headlines.

In fact, this fight is entirely about the wider consequences for No 10 and the Tories if they agree to hand over unredacted information to Heather Hallett's inquiry.

It could mean that all kinds of text messages, WhatsApp exchanges, emails, minutes, notes and diaries – written by numerous other ministers, aides and officials – avoid the red pen of the government's lawyers and ultimately make their way into the public domain.

He will have to consider how it would look for his administration to conceal material from a government commissioned inquiry

Sunak himself is the most prominent member of the government whose Covid-era material could end up having to be handed over unredacted.

The unanswered questions about decision-making in the pandemic are endless. There is still little visibility around how lockdowns and restrictions were decided, who took the decisions, how closely politicians listened to their scientific advisers and, importantly, whether Sunak ever believed economic considerations trumped public health advice.

If the government backs down over Johnson and Cook, it will have to take a similar approach to all this other material as well. And this is why many observers believe the row will probably end up in a judicial review. There is a fundamental disagreement between the government and the inquiry's "redaction protocol", which makes it clear that it believes its own lawyers – not those of the government legal department – should decide what is deemed relevant.

Some Tories, and former civil servants such as the former cabinet secretary Robin Butler, believe it might be possible to come to a compromise, with greater dialogue between the government and the inquiry over what redactions will be made. However, the gap between the inquiry's position and the government seems very wide. In weighing up whether to seek a review, Sunak will need to consider how it would look for his administration to try to conceal material from an inquiry that the government itself commissioned.

There is a risk now for the prime minister that the whole process would lose credibility as a vehicle for establishing the truth about how the pandemic was handled – even if he were to win on a point of law.

No 10 will now have to decide what looks worse: a potential exposure of chaotic or incompetent decision-making during Johnson's era, or a reluctance by his own administration to face up to the truth.

Sick pay
Low rates left UK 'brutally exposed'

Caroline Davies

The Covid inquiry must take an unflinching look at how Britain's lack of decent sick pay left the country "brutally exposed" during the pandemic, the TUC has said.

Britain entered the pandemic with the lowest rate of statutory sick pay (SSP) in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) –an organisation of 38 developed nations – and with millions unable access it, the union body claimed.

This "broken sick pay system" hugely undermined the country's preparedness and ability to deal with the pandemic, and resulted in millions facing a huge financial cliff edge if they contracted Covid, it added.

The inquiry will take witness evidence from 13 June.

Nearly a quarter of the British workforce had to rely on statutory sick pay if they needed to self-isolate, rising to 31% for the lowest paid. With SSP at £94.25 a week, the average worker faced a drop in earnings of about £418 if they had to self-isolate, the TUC said.

In 2019 sick pay was worth 18% of average earnings – compared with 34% when it was introduced in 1983.

The Conservatives scrapped changes that would have extended SSP to nearly 2 million low-paid workers who did not qualify for it, which left the most financially insecure with no form of safety net.

The TUC general secretary, Paul Nowak, said: "The failure to provide proper financial support was an act of self-sabotage that left millions brutally exposed to the pandemic. Many workers simply couldn't afford to self-isolate. This pushed up infection rates, put a huge strain on our public services and ballooned the cost of test and trace.

"The government could have boosted sick pay and made sure everyone could get it. But ministers chose not to."

He added: "It is vital that we learn the lessons of what went wrong – and where government austerity policies left us ill-prepared for a pandemic."

A government spokesperson said the inquiry would look at sick pay as outlined in its terms of reference.

▼ With the average worker facing an unsustainable drop in earnings if they isolated, many were forced to work while infected
PHOTOGRAPH: VICTORIA JONES/PA



Rapper Diddy sues drinks firm Diageo for alleged racism

Dominic Rushe
New York

The US rapper, producer and entrepreneur Sean Combs has sued the drinks company Diageo, accusing the British multinational of racism and of deliberately undermining a joint venture brand of spirits.

In a court filing yesterday, lawyers acting for Combs said Diageo and its executives had "put their feet on the neck of Mr Combs' brands", choking off production, distribution and sales of Combs Wines and Spirits brands, including Cîroc vodka and the high-end tequila brand DeLeón.

Combs' lawyers are seeking a court order "to provide the equal treatment" they say that Diageo had "contractually promised".

The filing states that Combs Wines and Spirits plans to seek "billions of dollars in damages due to Diageo's neglect and breaches" in a separate lawsuit. "In public, Diageo - a multi-billion-dollar, publicly traded spirits company - proclaims itself a leader in diversity and inclusion," the filing, in New York supreme court, began. But that claim was "a lie", Combs' lawyers said, alleging that the company had been "unwilling to treat its Black partners equally - even when explicitly required by contract to do so".

Combs, who has used the names Puff Daddy, P Diddy and Diddy, has had a long and successful venture with Diageo in promoting its Cîroc vodka brand. In 2014, he announced a 50/50 partnership with Diageo to buy DeLeón, an "ultra-premium" tequila. The brand's most expensive offerings can cost close to $1,000 (£800).

In the filing, Combs' lawyers accuse Diageo of failing to support the brands, and of marginalising their appeal by marketing them as "Black brands". "Rather than equal treatment, Diageo has treated Mr Combs and his brands worse than others because he is Black. Diageo has typecast Cîroc and DeLeón, apparently deciding they are 'Black brands' that should be targeted only to 'urban' consumers," the filings claim.



▲ *Sean Combs, aka Diddy, claims Diageo typecast his tequila and vodka brands as 'Black brands' and failed to support their marketing*

> ***'In public Diageo proclaims itself a leader in diversity and inclusion'***
>
> **US lawsuit filing**
> *For Sean Combs*

The filings claim that Diageo's president of reserve and new business, Stephen Rust, directly acknowledged the company's racist undertones in 2019, telling Combs that "some within Diageo's leadership resented him for making too much money".

Diageo bought two other tequila brands after the DeLeón deal - Don Julio and Casamigos, the spirit company co-founded by the actor George Clooney. Combs' suit claims the company has "effectively abandoned DeLeón" to focus on Casamigos, Aviation Gin (owned by Ryan Reynolds) and Ketel One vodka.

The neglect had led to poor design decisions and shortages that damaged the brands, the filing claims.

In a statement, a Diageo spokesperson said: "This is a business dispute, and we are saddened that Mr Combs has chosen to recast this matter as anything other than that. Our steadfast commitment to diversity within our company and the communities we serve is something we take very seriously.

"We categorically deny the allegations that have been made and will vigorously defend ourselves in the appropriate forum."

Boy and girl die after incident in Bournemouth

Vivian Ho

A 17-year-old boy and a 12-year-old girl died and a man was arrested on suspicion of manslaughter last night after an incident on Bournemouth beach, Dorset police said.

Police attended the scene after receiving a call for assistance at 4.32pm yesterday. Emergency responders recovered 10 people from the water, including a man in his 40s who was later arrested.

The boy and the girl were transported to a hospital, where they died. The ambulance service treated the other eight people for non-life-threatening injuries.

Dorset police have launched an investigation into the deaths. "Our thoughts are with the loved ones of the young people who tragically died and we are doing all we can to support their families," said DCS Neil Corrigan. "We are at the early stages of our investigation and would ask people not to speculate about the circumstances surrounding the incident."





▲ Fans have debated the meaning of the song's title, Padam Padam

Can't get her out of our heads: new Kylie single wins over TikTok generation

Nadia Khomami
Arts and culture correspondent

It's been hailed as Kylie Minogue's "comeback" single and has generated countless memes and dance videos on social media.

Yet when it was released earlier this month, Padam Padam was not played on youth stations such as BBC Radio 1 and Capital FM because it was targeted at older audiences.

Now, thanks in part to the song's popularity on platforms including TikTok and Twitter, Minogue has found a new generation of fans.

The track has topped the UK Big Top 40 and reached No 26 on the official singles chart - becoming the biggest-selling single of the week and Minogue's highest-charting single since 2014's Into the Blue.

The song has also earned Minogue her first Top 40 hit in Australia in more than a decade, and she is set to enter the US pop charts for the first time in more than 20 years.

"My heart is bursting with joy," the singer said in an Instagram post on her 55th birthday last weekend. "I just wanted to say thank you, thank you so, so much for all the birthday messages and the Padam reaction and the love."

Inspired by Edith Piaf's 1951 song of the same name, Padam Padam is a reference to the sound of the human heartbeat, and has spread thanks to its infectious nature and brevity (it clocks in at 2 mins, 46 seconds).

Fans have posted videos debating the meaning of the title and choreographed dance routines for it.

The former Neighbours actor, who has 2.5 million followers on Instagram, said she was grateful for the impact of the web on her music career - which has had seven UK No 1s, including I Should Be So Lucky, Spinning Around and Can't Get You Out of My Head. She is to release an album, Tension, in September and will embark on her biggest tour in five years in 2024, with arena concerts across the UK.

"It's been a little tricky trying to navigate and to understand it," she said. "I feel like I have one foot in the old world and one foot in the new."

The chart analyst and historian James Masterton said: "What makes the success of Padam Padam significant is that it is genuinely Kylie's first hit single of the streaming era, her first since paid purchases ceased to be a mass market product seven or eight years ago. She has bridged a generation gap with a hit record that is reaching out both to her loyal (and ageing) acolytes but also a new generation of music fans."

Masterton said such a career revival was not unheard of - with Diana Ross, Aretha Franklin and Dusty Springfield having comebacks in the 80s and 90s. Tributes to Tina Turner last week focused on her "second" career - she recorded What's Love Got To Do With It in her 40s, while Cher was 52 when she recorded Believe.

"What helped the Kylie single blow up was indeed TikTok," Masterton said. "Over the past three years it has become one of the most vitally important platforms for breaking and discovering hit singles. And that's bypassing traditional media routes."

He pointed to a "fascinating shift" in the way pop music was embraced. "We are now judging the success of pop songs by the number of people who actively engage with them rather than just passively sit back and listen," he said.



'It's tricky to navigate ... I feel like I have one foot in the old world and one foot in the new'
Kylie Minogue
Singer and actor

◀ Kylie Minogue performs at an awards ceremony at the Royal Albert Hall, London, in 2021. An arena tour is planned next year
PHOTOGRAPH: JEFF SPICER/BFC/GETTY

Drug regulator approves new treatment to prevent migraines

Andrew Gregory
Health editor

Thousands of people in England could benefit from a migraine drug that has been approved on the NHS.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (Nice), the drugs regulator, said it was recommending rimegepant for preventing migraines in the approximately 145,000 adults where at least three previous preventive treatments had failed.

The drug, also called Vydura and made by Pfizer, is taken as a wafer that dissolves under the tongue. It is the first time Nice has recommended an oral treatment to prevent migraines.

"Each year the lives of millions of people in England are blighted by migraine attacks," said Helen Knight, the director of medicines evaluation at Nice. "They can be extremely debilitating and can significantly affect a person's quality of life."

Nice has given the green light for use of rimegepant to prevent episodic migraines, which is where a person has fewer than 15 migraine days each month. The draft guidance recommends rimegepant for adults who have at least four migraine attacks a month but fewer than 15.

About 5.6 million people in England are thought to have episodic migraines. It is estimated about 190,000 migraine attacks are experienced every day.

Rimegepant works by stopping the release of a protein around the brain that causes intense inflammation and is responsible for the severe pain associated with migraine attacks.

Treatment options for preventing migraines include drugs used for other conditions such as beta blockers, antidepressants and epilepsy medications. These can have significant side-effects and may be ineffective for some people.

Nice also published draft guidance for consultation yesterday that did not recommend rimegepant for treating acute migraine.

Charities welcomed the arrival of another treatment to prevent migraines, but expressed disappointment that it had not also been approved for acute cases.

Boy, 12, died after wall collapsed on him, Essex inquest hears

PA Media

A 12-year-old boy who was helping his father to knock down a garage wall at their home died after it collapsed on both of them, an inquest has heard.

Scott-Swaley Stevens' mother, Charmaine Lee, went to the fire station next door, shouting: "Help, my baby is trapped," a hearing in Chelmsford was told yesterday.

Scott-Swaley died at the scene in Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, on 21 October last year while his father, Scott Stevens, was freed.

The Essex senior coroner, Lincoln Brookes, concluded that Scott-Swaley's death was an "extraordinarily tragic accident".

Scott Stevens told police, in a statement read by the coroner: "The wall fell on to us both after we had rocked it to push it over. I didn't use any tools to complete this. It fell on to us within seconds which I couldn't stop."

He said he believed they were "trapped under the wall for the next two hours but no one could hear us", but Lee told the inquest she believed they had been outside for about five minutes. The coroner said he suspected that the amount of time was "much less" than Stevens had believed, noting he was "in a great deal of pain and a great deal of distress" after the wall collapsed.

In a statement, Simon Tarrant, a firefighter, said that Lee had shouted for help at the fire station that was next door to their home. He said that when firefighters went out, people were "frantically trying to move the rubble".

DI James Hardingham said police were called by the fire service at 6.56pm and Scott-Swaley was pronounced dead at the scene.

"They rocked the wall but, unfortunately, it rocked backwards on to them," said Hardingham. He said Lee's daughter had raised the alarm, going inside and shouting to her mother: "Help, Mum, Daddy and Swaley are trapped under the wall".

Brookes recorded cause of death as compression asphyxia after the wall collapsed on them. "The weight of the wall put such pressure on his chest that his heart couldn't work properly," he said. "His blood couldn't reach his brain, he went unconscious and died."



▲ Scott-Swaley Stevens had been helping his father knock down a wall

Leading Labour backer vows to match donations to Just Stop Oil

Aletha Adu
Political correspondent

One of Labour's biggest donors pledged yesterday to match any public donations to Just Stop Oil for 48 hours, as Keir Starmer faced mounting Conservative pressure to return funds from the businessman over his backing for the environmental group.

Dale Vince, the founder of the green energy company Ecotricity, has given at least £1.5m to Labour over the last 10 years, according to the Electoral Commission.

Senior Tories including the home secretary, Suella Braverman, and the party chairman, Greg Hands, have accused Starmer of being "in bed" with Just Stop Oil's backers, claiming accepting their money is tantamount to supporting the group's tactics.

Braverman questioned whether Starmer was going "soft on crime" as a result of receiving the money from Vince. "He had the cheek to claim Labour is no longer the party of protest this year – the reality is he's in bed with their donors," she said in the Daily Telegraph.

On Twitter at midday yesterday, Vince urged people to make a donation to the climate activist group in the next 48 hours. "I will double the amount you give," he said.


▲ *Ecotricity founder Dale Vince has given Labour more than £1.5m*

Starmer has previously criticised Just Stop Oil activists, describing their actions as "wrong" and saying they were "arrogant" for thinking "they're the only people that have got the answer to this".

The shadow international secretary, Nick Thomas-Symonds, defended Labour accepting donations from Vince, insisting it did not affect the party's views on the campaign group.



UK tried to cover up former envoy's 'crimes', ex-civil servant claims

Haroon Siddique
Legal affairs correspondent

A former civil servant has accused the government of an attempt to cover up "crimes" by the former British ambassador to the United States, who he claims leaked intelligence to his lover.

Andrew Hale-Byrne is suing the foreign secretary, James Cleverly, and the international trade secretary, Kemi Badenoch, alleging that he was arrested in order to divert attention from Lord Darroch, the former UK ambassador to the US.

Hale-Byrne was arrested by counterterrorism police at his home in 2020, while recovering from cancer surgery, over allegations that he had leaked diplomatic cables in which Darroch criticised Donald Trump. Hale-Byrne denies being the leaker and was never charged. In his legal claim, he alleges that his arrest was designed to deflect attention from Darroch, who he claims was leaking intelligence – unrelated to the cables – from the Five Eyes alliance.

Hale-Byrne alleges that Darroch had provided classified information to a CNN correspondent with whom he was having an affair.

She has denied the affair with Darroch and that she received intelligence from him. An article about the alleged affair in the Sun was taken down.

At a high court hearing, held online, on Tuesday, the judge, Master Davison, heard arguments as to whether the government could submit a "closed" defence. Closed material can be viewed only by special advocates who cannot discuss the evidence with anyone else, including the parties – and their regular lawyers – in the case.


▲ *Kim Darroch resigned as the UK's ambassador to the US in July 2019*

In a statement by Hale-Byrne, read to the court by his barrister, Paul Diamond, the claimant said there was an "official UK government cover-up of Kim Darroch's crimes" and it was using the Justice and Security Act, which is normally employed in terrorism cases, to do so.

He said: "The civil service is attempting to weaponise counterterrorism legislation in an effort to block the press and the public from my high court claim against James Cleverly and Kemi Badenoch. Any corrupt or foolish Tory government minister who signs off on an application under the Justice and Security Act to block the press and the public should be ashamed of themselves for such Soviet-style behaviour. We expect this behaviour from totalitarian regimes, such as Russia, China, and North Korea, but it is an outrage this could now happen in the UK."

With a number of press present, Davison said Hale-Byrne's statement appeared to be aimed at the "public gallery", while Adam Heppinstall KC suggested that the real reason for the hearing, which he branded "unnecessary", was "so the claimant's statement could be read".

Diamond told the court the government was trying to "misuse" the Justice and Security Act, but Davison granted permission for a closed defence to be filed, which a judge will then review to assess the need for secrecy. The claimant was ordered to bear the costs of yesterday's hearing.

Darroch resigned as US ambassador in July 2019 after the then foreign secretary, Boris Johnson, refused to back him following the leak of cables in which Darroch described the Trump administration as dysfunctional, clumsy and adept, and the then president as "radiating insecurity".

Diamond told the court that the US Congress was considering holding hearings into the allegations against Darroch.

Hale-Byrne was allegedly arrested the day after the Sun offered Darroch the right to reply to the story relating to the alleged affair. The civil servant was said to have been profoundly affected by the experience, becoming homeless and suicidal.

Whales, seals, wrecks and reefs take Causeway coast to top of British wildlife poll

Esther Addley

Named after its geology and best known for the dramatic sweep of its scenery, Northern Ireland's Causeway coast has now earned a new accolade: as the UK's favourite place for wildlife.

The coastline, which runs along the north-east of Ireland from Lough Foyle to the Glens of Antrim, was voted the nation's favourite in a poll by BBC Wildlife magazine, beating the Isles of Scilly in fourth place, Scaur Glen in Dumfries and Galloway in third place, and, in an unexpected second place, Wimbledon Common in London.

Tara Shine, an environmental scientist who nominated the coastline, said it was a "place of outstanding natural beauty, with wild dunes, sheer cliffs, and the magnificent rock formations of the Giant's Causeway".

As a student at the nearby University of Ulster, she said she had enjoyed spotting whales, dolphins, seals and basking sharks along the coastline: "I spent some of my most memorable days near, in and under the water here, catching waves off the sandy beach at Portrush, snorkelling with curious grey seals, and scuba-diving off the Skerries and below the dramatic cliffs of Rathlin Island, where I glided over stony reefs with dogfish and among shipwrecks with conger eels."

To mark its 60th birthday this year, BBC Wildlife magazine asked 60 conservationists, writers, presenters and photographers to nominate their favourite UK nature destination. On the magazine's website 5,000 participants voted on the selection, and views about the 10 most popular destinations were then canvassed among 2,000 people by YouGov to arrive at the overall winner.

Richard Lafferty, whose company Aquaholics runs diving training and wildlife boat tours from nearby Portstewart, said he was not surprised at the result. "The waters off the north coast here are very rich in marine life because we have quite strong tidal currents and our waters are full of plankton. It feeds the soft corals and the sponges underwater, which bring in the small fish, the birds and the biggest bigger predators like our dolphins, porpoises, whales and basking sharks."



▼ *The Giant's Causeway, on the Causeway coast: 'A place of outstanding natural beauty'*
PHOTOGRAPH: ALAMY



Grey seal pups can be seen on Rathlin Island

5,000

Number of voters who took part in the first part of the poll, on the BBC Wildlife magazine website

Visitors were often surprised by the abundance of wildlife in the deep, warm, Atlantic waters, said Lafferty. "For years, we've been taking people out [who say], 'we'll learn to scuba dive here so when we go abroad we can do it.' And then they come back to us after being abroad and they say 'we saw more marine life here'." Of four trips on Tuesday, three included dolphin sightings, he said, while guests on one trip this week spotted six minke whales.

Several stretches of the coastline are owned by the National Trust, which said it was "delighted to be one of the custodians who help encourage wildlife along the Causeway coast". The Giant's Causeway itself, the trust said, was the home of "some very special species, including the pygmy sorrel moth, one of the world's smallest moths, the northern colletes bee, and the black-tailed skimmer dragonfly, as well as the narrow-mouthed whorl snail".

The trust added that stromatolites – stony structures built by colonies of bacteria, which it called "one of the earliest known life forms on Earth, predating even the dinosaurs" – were another surprise find at the Unesco world heritage site.

Tourism Northern Ireland said the coastline had "long been recognised as one of the most stunning coastal routes in the world", and it was "no surprise" it had also been recognised for its wildlife. The organisation added: "Among the jagged hills and wave-crashed cliffs there's an abundance of wildlife for visitors to enjoy. From red squirrels and the Irish hare to Europe's largest seabird colonies, seals and dolphins, the Causeway Coast and Glens has a plethora of nature on offer."



Schofield could be quizzed by barrister over affair at ITV

Jim Waterson
Media editor

Phillip Schofield could be interviewed by a leading barrister about his relationship with a younger colleague on This Morning, after ITV launched an external review.

Schofield, 61, quit the daytime television programme earlier this month amid tensions with his co-host, Holly Willoughby. Days later, the presenter admitted having an "unwise, but not illegal" affair with a substantially younger colleague.

ITV's chief executive, Carolyn McCall, said the "extent of his deception" meant it would be necessary to have an independent review, to be led by the employment lawyer Jane Mulcahy KC.

Sources at ITV suggested the barrister would seek to interview Schofield, the younger employee, and those who raised concerns about the relationship. She will also be allowed to review employment records and internal HR documents.

McCall said ITV did investigate the relationship in 2019, but that at the time Schofield and the employee had "categorically denied the rumours".

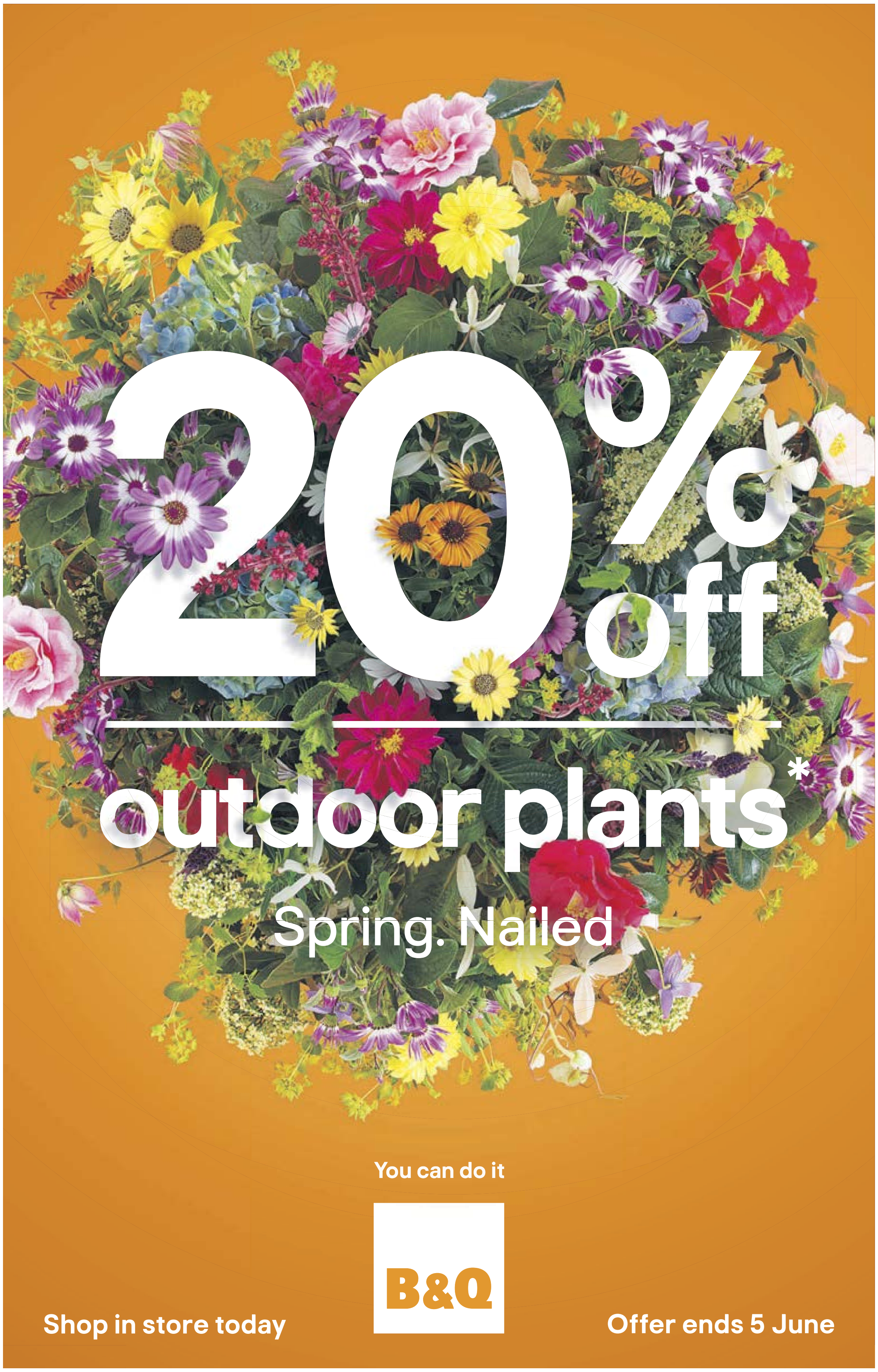
The chief executive also said the young employee had been an adult when he had joined the show: "The ITV employee was aged 19 when he first did work experience at This Morning in 2015, and 20 when he succeeded in securing a job as a runner on the show. He left ITV in 2021.

"He has made it clear that he does not wish to be named or identified in connection with this matter."

In a letter to the government and media regulator Ofcom, she said ITV had reviewed its records and had done what it could in the circumstances: "These show that when rumours of a relationship between Phillip Schofield and an employee of ITV first began to circulate in late 2019/early 2020, ITV investigated.

"Both parties were questioned then and both categorically and repeatedly denied the rumours … In addition, ITV spoke to a number of people who worked on This Morning and … did not find any evidence of a relationship beyond hearsay and rumour."

Willoughby is due to return from holiday on Monday.



*Offer excludes: bulbs, turf and any products sold and shipped by verified sellers on diy.com.
Subject to availability. Ends 5 June. See in store or diy.com

Spending on asylum system has quadrupled under Conservatives

Rajeev Syal
Home affairs editor

Public spending on the asylum system has quadrupled under Conservative-led governments, official figures show, as Rishi Sunak prepares to discuss with other European leaders ways of reducing the number of people seeking asylum.

Labour has unearthed figures that show the amount spent on processing asylum claims and accommodation has increased from £570m in 2012 to £2.1bn in 2021. There was a further substantial increase in 2022, as slower asylum decisions and Suella Braverman's last-minute decision-making led to an increase in costly hotel use, the party has claimed.

It is expected to increase further when the figures for 2022-23 are published, as recent estimates show that £2.4bn from the overseas aid budget was used to support the asylum system on top of normal costs.

Last week, the government announced that the asylum backlog had reached a new record high of 173,000. Over the past year, decisions have been made on only 1% of small boat asylum cases. Since 2011, the productivity rate of Home Office caseworkers has fallen from 14 decisions per month in 2011 to just five a month in the last financial year.

Yvette Cooper, the shadow home secretary, said: "Nothing the government is doing is working, and their legislation is making the situation worse, with more people stuck in the system than ever before."

Sonya Sceats, chief executive of Freedom from Torture, said: "The tragedy is that these figures do not reflect an increase in protection to people fleeing torture and persecution.

"Asylum decision-making has almost ground to a halt under this government, with vulnerable men, women, and children left in limbo and shunted into cramped hotel rooms for years on end."

The figures were released as the prime minister prepared to discuss border security at a gathering of leaders at the European Political Community (EPC) in Moldova.

Initially envisaged by the French president, Emmanuel Macron, as a platform for wider European unity, the EPC will bring together the leaders of the 27 EU member states and 19 other countries including Ukraine, Turkey, the UK and Balkan nations.

The prime minister is to announce the start of negotiations on a new returns agreement with Moldova and confirm that a similar deal struck with Georgia has entered into force. Sunak will also announce a partnership with Bulgaria to help officials stop people-smuggling gang.

Addressing the meeting, he will say that Europe is facing unprecedented threats at its borders from Vladimir Putin's Russia and a rise in "illegal immigrants".

"From Putin's utter contempt of other countries' sovereignty to the rise in organised immigration crime across our continent … we cannot address these problems without Europe's governments and institutions working closely together. In every meeting, every summit, the security of our borders must be top of the agenda," Sunak will say.

"The UK will be at the heart of this international effort to stop the boats."



Only 1% of small boat asylum cases have had a decision made over the past year
PHOTOGRAPH: GARETH FULLER/PA

Workers from outside EU outnumber EU citizens for first time, new analysis reveals

Carmen Aguilar García

There are now more non-EU than EU workers in a number of sectors that were previously reliant on European citizens, demonstrating the Brexit effect and the impact of international events on immigration patterns.

Guardian analysis shows the number of non-EU workers surpassed their EU counterparts for the first time in 2022, at an average of 2.7 million against 2.5 million last year.

It also shows that various sectors that once relied on EU workers – such as accommodation and food services, administration and support services, as well as wholesale, retail and repair of vehicles – have seen a shift to non-EU and British staff.

Other sectors such as agriculture, forestry and fishing still depend on EU workers but have witnessed changes. One in seven (15%) of people employed in the sector last summer were EU citizens, a significant decline from the 23% employed pre-pandemic. The proportion of non-EU workers has risen to 6%, compared with 2% in 2019 and just 1% before the Brexit referendum.

The director of Oxford University's Migration Observatory, Madeleine Sumption, said that Brexit had contributed to the shift with decisions such as the "work visa system [for] care workers or [liberalising] post-study work rules for international students", but "it is definitely not the only thing going on".

She said: "The Brexit policies restricted migration into low-wage industries. However, this migration into low-wage industries ended up happening anyway, for other reasons that were not part of the Brexit prospectus, such as the Hong Kong and Ukraine schemes, and increased demand from the NHS."

Before 2020 two-thirds of foreign workers in the hospitality and administration sectors were EU citizens, as well as half of those in the vehicle and mining sectors. Now they make up fewer than half of non-UK born workers, according to data from Revenue and Customs.

Manufacturing and arts and entertainment still employ more EU citizens than non-EU nationals, but the latter number rose as European numbers fell. Between 2019 and 2022, the number of non-EU citizens in manufacturing grew by 23% compared with a 5% decrease among EU staff. In the art and entertainment sector, the increase was 13% versus a 12% fall in the number of EU workers.

> *'All major industries have increased recruitment of non-EU workers'*
>
> **Madeleine Sumption**
> *Migration Observatory*

The proportion of non-EU foreign workers in health has increased from 10% of the total workforce in 2019 to 14% in December 2022.

The analysis shows that, while the number of non-EU workers has risen steadily since 2014, the first year for which data is available, it has accelerated since the start of 2021, reaching almost 3 million by December 2022, a 40% increase in two years.

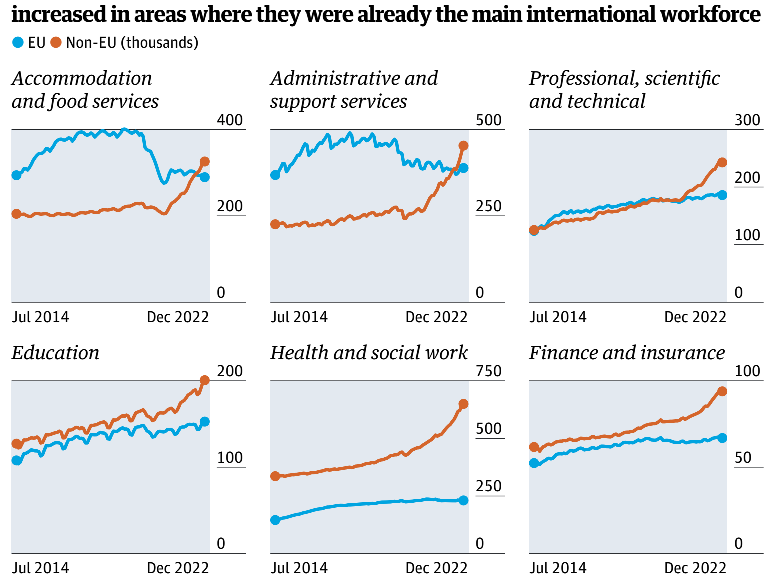
In the same period, the number of EU workers has remained stable with an increase of just 1% between December 2020 and December 2022, coinciding with stopping freedom of movement at the end of 2020.

Forecasts pre-Brexit suggested industries that had relied heavily on EU workers "would struggle to recruit migrant workers because most of the jobs were not considered skilled enough to qualify for the immigration system", said Sumption.

"But the reality has been quite different: all major industries have increased recruitment of non-EU workers, often sharply," she said.

This is mainly because "more non-EU citizens have come to the UK in non-work routes that allow them to work in any job," she added, "and perhaps also family members of visa holders or international students, who are allowed to work part-time during their studies".

Non-EU workers have overtaken EU citizens in some industries and have increased in areas where they were already the main international workforce



Source: HMRC. Note: monthly counts of payrolled employments in the UK by sector. Only non-UK nationals included

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(investment companies with variable capital under Dutch law, the "Companies")

At the annual general meetings of shareholders on 24 May 2023, the following dividends per share over the 2022 financial year were agreed:

	ISIN	Gross amount in EUR	Dividend tax
Robeco Sustainable Global Stars Equities Fund	NL0000289783	1.00	15%
Robeco Sustainable Global Stars Equities Fund - EUR G	NL0010366407	1.00	15%
Rolinco	NL0000289817	0.60	15%
Rolinco - EUR G	NL0010510798	0.60	15%

Shareholders not liable to Dutch domestic taxes are advised to contact their own advisor to discuss the effect of the deduction of 15% Dutch dividend tax on their own situation. Principal paying agent is ING Bank N.V. in Amsterdam.

The following schedule shall apply:

Agenda	Dividend dates (Transfer Agent)	Dividend dates (Euronext)	Explanation
Record date	5 June 2023	8 June 2023	Shares/participating units issued up to Dealing Day 5 June 2023 are entitled for the dividend distribution. Euronext will use the settlement positions as of 8 June 2023.
Ex-dividend date	6 June 2023	7 June 2023	The NAV per share/participating unit will be quoted ex-dividend as of the Dealing Day 6 June 2023. The NAV per participating unit of the Dealing Day 6 June 2023 will be published on 7 June 2023. Euronext will stamp this NAV with date 7 June 2023.
Application for reinvestment	21 June 2023	21 June 2023	Deadline for reinvestment application.
Reinvestment date	23 June 2023	26 June 2023	The Dealing Day of reinvestment will be 23 June 2023. Execution at Euronext will take place on 26 June 2023.
Payment date cash and shares	28 June 2023	28 June 2023	

The boards of the Companies

Rotterdam, 31 May 2023



▼ *The London Welsh school keeps its fees low thanks to parent volunteers and money from Welsh supporters*
PHOTOGRAPH: SEAN SMITH/THE GUARDIAN

Battle to survive

Will Labour's VAT plan be the end of specialist private schools?

Many small fee-paying schools only stay afloat thanks to a combination of donations and goodwill

Richard Adams
Education editor



Parents and children say they love the London Welsh school, the only bilingual Welsh language nursery and primary school in England. The only problem, according to the school's chair of governors, is there aren't enough of them.

For 65 years Ysgol Gymraeg Llundain has been teaching Welsh language and culture to children of the Welsh diaspora. But since Covid, the tiny independent school in west London has become even tinier. The school began last year with 25 pupils, until the end of pandemic measures resulted in many of its families moving back to Wales. This year the London Welsh school has just eight pupils.

"The problem we've got now is the younger children haven't joined. And Covid had a part to play in that, because before lockdown families would make an effort to travel further and come to us. But because we were all told to stay local, of course children went to a local nursery and they then progressed to a local school," said Glenys Roberts, the chair of governors who has been involved with the school for 30 years as a parent and former teacher.

"It's not easy with such small numbers, but the school is a happy place and full of love. We need some more children but we will carry on."

While wealthy and elite schools such as Eton and St Paul's girls' school come to mind when people think of fee-paying schools, a larger number of independent schools in England are like the London Welsh school - small, precarious and catering to a niche that state schools can't provide for.

Eton and Ysgol Gymraeg Llundain may soon have something in common: a future Labour government aims to apply VAT of 20% to the fees they charge pupils.

Labour says adding VAT will raise around £1.6bn a year, with the shadow education secretary, Bridget Phillipson, pledging to use the funds to recruit more staff in vital subjects such as maths and physics.

"Excellence must be for everyone - that is why the next Labour government will invest in more teachers to fill these gaps and provide expertise, paid for by ending tax breaks for schools," Phillipson told school leaders in April.

The prospect of higher school fees has led to warnings of an exodus of pupils from the private sector, with the extra cost to the government eating into the £1.6bn windfall.

> ***'Finding even our modest fees might be difficult for some of our families, so a hike of 20% would make a difference'***
>
> **Glenys Roberts**
> *London Welsh school*

Jeremy Hunt, the chancellor, used last year's autumn statement to attack Labour's policy, citing predictions that it would result in "up to 90,000 children from the independent sector switching to state schools".

A survey of parents by the Independent Schools Council (ISC) found 20% said they would "definitely" withdraw their children from private school if VAT was added, costing the government about £600m a year in additional spending on state schools.

But economists who specialise in education said they were highly

sceptical that adding VAT would spark an immediate exodus.

"I think the suggestion that there's some sort of mass rush as soon as the policy comes in is incredibly unlikely. It's not impossible, but it's incredibly unlikely," said Luke Sibieta, a senior research fellow at the Institute for Fiscal Studies.

One reason, according to Sibieta, is that the willingness of parents to pay for private education is not directly related to its price. In economic jargon, demand for private schooling is "inelastic", meaning that price increases don't lead to falls in pupil numbers by the same amount, if at all.

"The only honest answer we can really give is that we don't know what the effect will be. I think surveying parents is not really the best way to find out, because any parent who is asked 'do you want to pay 20% more for your child's education?' is going to say no," Sibieta said.

"That's not to say that if you put 20% VAT on fees there wouldn't be an effect on demand, because there probably would be. But demand for private schooling is often shaped by things like culture, aspirations, whether you went to a private school as a child, so it's the kind of thing that we probably think of as being quite inelastic.

"But the truth is, we don't really know what's going to happen until it actually happens."

Economists said the impact of adding VAT depended on several interlocking factors, including how much of the increase was passed on to parents, as well as their income and ability to afford the higher fees, and their unwillingness to disrupt their children's education by abruptly changing schools.

Dr Jake Anders, an economist and deputy director of University College London's centre for education policy and equalising opportunities, said: "The VAT rules are not that you have to take what your price is today and hike it by 20%. The schools decide what changes in price they are going to make in response, and that will be informed by their costs and their ability to trim those costs in order to keep the price from rising, as well as their knowledge of what is likely to happen to demand in response to fees rising."

Adding VAT to fees would allow private schools to offset costs by reclaiming VAT on their spending, which would knock several percentage points off any increase. Anders said private schools could also copy what state schools had done when faced with shrinking budgets: allow class sizes to rise, cut back on overheads, sell off assets and appeal for donations.

Anders said his "gut feeling" was that there wouldn't be a mass exodus of pupils.

"Basically, it seems unlikely to me. Apart from anything else, it seems unlikely that private schools would just stand by and watch pupils leave and not do something about their price. Ultimately, they set the price," Anders said.

Sibieta said many parents who could afford current fees of £15,000 to £20,000 a year were likely to be able to afford further increases, based on past behaviour.

"What we do know is that fees have been going up inexorably for the last 20 years, you see the 5% increase in fees annually, on average, over the last 20 years. And still the share of pupils in private schools has not changed almost at all over time."

But while some well-established private schools have the resources to cope, including millions of pounds in endowments, investments and property, as well as profits from overseas branches in Asia and elsewhere, others such as London Welsh school will struggle to cope with VAT being added to fees.

The fees at London Welsh school are just over £4,000 a year – below the average per-pupil funding at state schools and far lower than the £20,000 day school fees charged by ISC member schools in London. While some ISC members boast heritage buildings, science blocks and leafy playing fields, the London Welsh school holds its classes at the Hanwell community centre in Ealing.

"The ethos of the school is not really 'private school'. We are an independent school, we have to ask for fees, because we've got to run the school and we can't run it on fresh air, unfortunately," said Roberts, the London Welsh chair of governors.

The school already keeps its fees low through donations from Welsh supporters and volunteering by parents. The Welsh government also gives an annual grant to promote the Welsh language, without which Roberts says the school would be in "dire straits".

"Our fees are modest and we keep them modest because of the nature of our families. So finding even our fees might be a challenge for some of our families. But yes, I feel a hike of 20% would make a difference. Whether it would put people off, it's possible, but it would have an effect on our families," Roberts said.



▲ *Many well-established schools, such as Eton college, have the resources to cope with VAT being added to fees* PHOTOGRAPH: MAUREEN MCLEAN/REX/SHUTTERSTOCK

The school's fans include Ofsted, which describes it as an extended family and praises its teaching for pupils learning to read "with equal confidence and fluency" in both English and Welsh. Angela Kay, whose son is still a pupil at London Welsh, described the school as "amazing" but lamented: "It's a shame people don't know it exists."

The Department for Education lists 2,394 independent schools registered in England. Of those, about 260 are members of the elite Heads' Conference or HMC, representing the best known private schools, including Westminster and Eton.

HMC schools are also part of the Independent Schools Council, whose 1,343 members in England charge nearly £17,000 a year for day pupils and educate the bulk of the more than 580,000 children attending private schools.

The ISC also includes a substantial number of privately owned schools, with more than 350 run by for-profit companies. Traditional family-owned private schools have been disappearing for decades, with recent years seeing overseas investors buying up private schools.

The London Welsh school is one of the more than 1,000 independent schools that mostly sit outside the ISC and which in many cases are nothing like their nominal peers. About 600 are special needs schools that Labour says it will exempt from VAT, while the rest range from the French government-backed Lycée Français Charles de Gaulle to others offering alternative pedagogies such as Montessori schools.

£1.6bn
The amount each year Labour says the 20% VAT levied on school fees would raise for the state sector

2,394
The number of independent schools registered in England, educating more than 580,000 children



▲ *The number of pupils at the London Welsh school has fallen from 25 at the start of 2022 to eight, partly thanks to Covid* PHOTOGRAPH: SEAN SMITH/THE GUARDIAN

Many others are faith schools, mostly small Islamic, Jewish or Christian schools. They tend to be based in borrowed spaces within mosques, community halls or even houses, with fees well below those of wealthier nearby private schools.

Emmanuel Christian School on the outskirts of Oxford is an interdenominational nursery and primary school with just 55 pupils. Lizzy Nesbitt, its headteacher, says its small size gives her the freedom to be innovative and "not feel bound to just follow what everybody deems to work, but to think quite creatively and thoughtfully and deeply" about how children learn as individuals.

"We really want children to understand how amazing and vast and exciting the world is. Underpinned by that is a Christian view that this is a world made for them by God the father, and He wants them to understand it and enjoy it, and appreciate it in its diversity and beauty and wonder. That then gets worked into our curriculum so that we choose really interesting topics to do with them that lights them up," Nesbitt said.

Emmanuel charges £6,500 a year, which is only a third of the fee for junior pupils attending a nearby prep school. Nesbitt said the school's ethos and community meant that both staff and parents were prepared to make financial sacrifices.

"Part of what makes it very special is that all of us do not command the salaries that we would within the state sector. Nor do we have a teacher's pension that we would have in the state sector," Nesbitt said.

"Whenever we send out the fee increase letter once a year, I always say to parents that this school is built by love and everybody gives in love. The staff give in love to make it more affordable, so that's a sacrifice that staff make."

She added: "Many of our parents are making sacrifices, because they're not from high income families. We have very few families who are earning six figures, I think probably 10%. So many families are making sacrifices to send their children here."

Nesbitt said that while she was confident the school would "prevail, regardless of government policy", if VAT was added to fees, she felt sad that the state was in effect taxing the goodwill of staff and parents.

"I regularly have parents visit the school who say my child is doing OK [in a state school] but they don't feel known, they're getting lost," Nesbitt said.

"When these children come to us, we're taking an obligation off the state to educate that child and the parents are taking on the cost of that child's education from the state, often at great sacrifice, so their child feels better known and their needs might be more fully met. And it feels to me cynical to tax that parent, who is acting in love for the good of their child."


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Music review

Still setting the stage alight after 50 years

Bruce Springsteen
Murrayfield Stadium, Edinburgh
★★★★☆

Alexis Petridis

Early on in a show that tops out close to three hours, Bruce Springsteen does a guitar solo. He is joined by saxophonist Jake Clemons, the nephew of Springsteen's late stage foil Clarence Clemons. Jake stares at Springsteen's fingers, apparently gawping in amazement at his dexterity. Then he closes his eyes and rests his head on Springsteen's shoulder as he continues playing.

It's a small moment that seems to sum up the continued appeal of Springsteen when in the company of his most celebrated backing band. It's simultaneously hokey – Jake and Springsteen may well do the same thing every night; there's a possibility it's rehearsed – and, with its echo of the pose struck by Springsteen and Jake's uncle on the cover of 1975's Born to Run, oddly moving.

A careful balance between the knowingly hammy and the earnest is very much what the E Street Band live experience is about: tonight's show encompasses both Springsteen ripping his shirt open and hysterically inquiring whether Edinburgh "believes in the faith and the power and the holiness" of rock'n'roll and introducing an acoustic version of Last Man Standing with a heartfelt eulogy for a member of the band he joined as a teenager. And, like the sheer length of their sets and the stagey cross-talk routine that Springsteen and guitarist Steven Van Zandt indulge in towards the end of their performance ("Stevie! I think it's time to go home!" "I don't wanna go home!", etc etc) it loudly telegraphs the sensation that this band are still having the time of their lives on stage, 51 years into their career.



▲ *Bruce Springsteen and Steven Van Zandt keeping up the intensity at Murrayfield Stadium, Edinburgh*
PHOTOGRAPH: EUAN CHERRY/GETTY

For all the world knows, it may be icy silences, decades-old resentments and bitter arguments about money all the way to the dressing rooms, but under the spotlights they igive off the air of people who are there because they desperately want to be there, a bar band that can't quite believe their luck to be playing a stadium, despite the fact that they've been playing stadiums since the early 80s. It could all be for real or it could be a shtick, but even if it's the latter, it's infectious.

Infectious enough to carry the audience through a gig that unspools from a breathless opening – one song after another, delivered without pause – into stuff such as Kitty's Back and a cover of the Commodores' Nightshift that semi-successfully attempts to dig past the original's slick 80s gloss and retrieve an old-fashioned gospel-soul song from beneath it. And quite possibly infectious enough to convert the less committed observer, despite the fact that the set really isn't designed for the uncommitted. The first song familiar to anyone who only knows the hits arrives an hour and 45 minutes in with Because the Night. The smashes – Thunder Road, Born to Run, Dancing in the Dark – are reserved for the show's finale. Born in the USA concludes with a frantic, climactic drum solo and crashing guitars, with Springsteen yelling encouragement at drummer Max Weinberg, as if he's somehow fearful that Born in the USA wasn't sufficiently rousing to start off with.

Then again, you wonder if there's anyone here who only knows the hits. The bellows of "Broooooce!" never abate regardless of whether he's excavating Candy's Room from the recesses of 1978's Darkness on the Edge of Town or powering through Glory Days. As the night wears on, the stage-side screens cut from the band to the crowd ever more frequently. You'd expect both to look a little wilted, but they don't: it's difficult to know who looks more euphoric.

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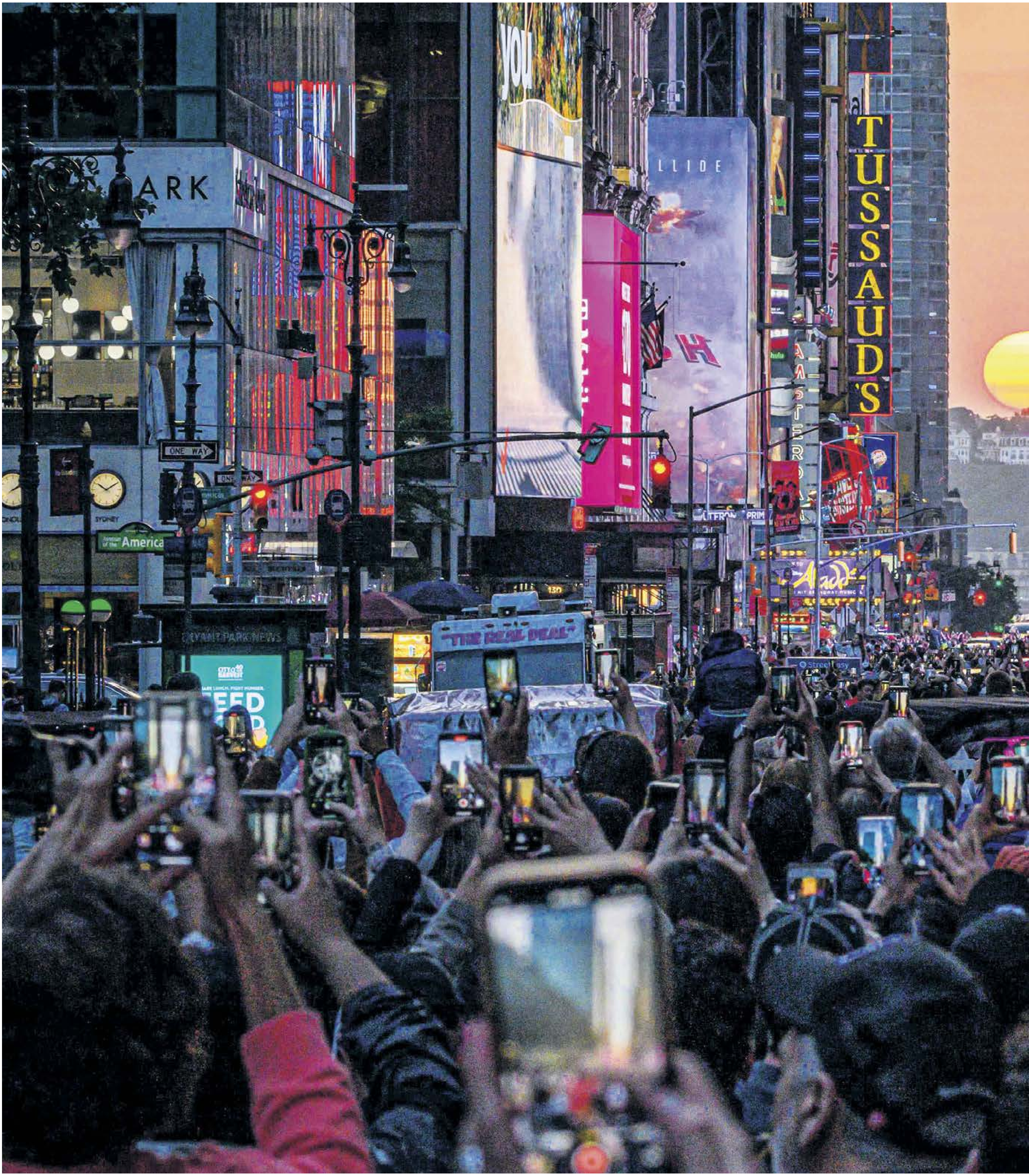
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Eyewitness



▼ Manhattan, New York
The sun sets in alignment with east to west streets in a twice-yearly event known as Manhattanhenge
PHOTOGRAPH: ED JONES/AFP



World

Ukrainian army readies for long-awaited counterattack

Continued from page 1

got in to do the same drill: storm the tree line, clear the trenches and form a defensive perimeter. Elsewhere, soldiers are rehearsing urban combat. "We're training in certain places where there are certain landscapes that are the exact landscapes that we will have to fight in," said the battalion commander, Petro Horbatenko.

Wagner group mercenaries have pulled out of the ruined city of Bakhmut in the past 10 days, but according to the Ukrainian military the company has left some of its convict battalions behind under the direct command of Moscow. Russia has also sent the 11th Parachute Brigade, an assault unit.

The Russian army is "a much more dangerous enemy than Wagner", Horbatenko said. "They are preparing for attacks. They want to catch our attack and then counterattack themselves."

The battle for Bakhmut lasted nine months, and the 3rd Assault Brigade was on the line for more than half of that, but its soldiers claimed not to be demoralised by the town's fall. "You win battles not by conquering and occupying land, but by destroying your enemy and their equipment and their storage depots," Horbatenko said. "We killed 10 of them for every one they killed of ours … but they were mostly from the Wagner group. To them they were just meat. So it is hard to say who won."

Dmytro Kukharchuk, the second battalion commander, said Wagner lives were counted so cheaply by their own side that when they were in close-quarters fighting with Ukrainians, Russian artillery would open fire, killing both sides.

The Ukrainian army does not disclose its losses, but they are clearly considerable. A third of the soldiers training yesterday were new recruits. Among them, unusually for a combat unit, was a woman, who identified herself by her call sign, Heavy, chosen for her taste in rock music.

Heavy is from a village in the Sumy region that was occupied by Russia in the first days of the war. She lost people close to her, but did not want to talk about the details. She joined the army in September and volunteered for the 3rd Assault Brigade in recent weeks. Asked why she had volunteered for a combat unit, Heavy said she thought it would be "interesting".

"Assault units are going to be the first ones to liberate our citizens so I want to be part of it," she explained. As for the counteroffensive, she said: "I can't wait. I am excited."

Heavy said her platoon leader, call sign Darwin, liked to tell her:

> *'We killed 10 of them for every one of ours … but to them they were just meat'*
>
> **Petro Horbatenko**
> *Battalion commander*

"Fear is contagious, but so is courage."

Darwin took part in a recent raid behind Russian lines to disrupt supply routes in woodland south of Bakhmut. Video from a helmet camera showed an exchange of gunfire that ended with Russians dead in their trenches.

Even as Bakhmut was falling, the Ukrainians remained on the offensive in the nearby countryside, but Kyiv's claims that it is working towards encircling the town are optimistic at best, the soldiers said. There are many more gruelling battles ahead.

The brigade has US-made M113 armoured vehicles like the one in use yesterday, which are a generation older than the Bradley infantry fighting vehicles being reserved for the counteroffensive, along with donated western tanks.

The battalion has improvised some weapons of its own, such as robot vehicles that can carry explosives into enemy lines.

Some of the first battalion's new recruits had come straight from training in the UK. "The European training is a bit different," Horbatenko said. "They do have experience but it is fighting the Taliban, and that is different from fighting a regular army.

"The Russians are a professional army," he said. "Their equipment is not modern at all, but there is a huge amount of it and it's quite enough to carry on this war. The only way for us to win is to be more professional and more technically advanced."



Moscow Kremlin rules out martial law after drone strike

Pjotr Sauer

Russia does not plan to declare martial law after the large-scale drone strike on Moscow, the Kremlin spokesperson, Dmitry Peskov, said yesterday.

The Kremlin's comments came after several leading Russian officials and pro-war figures urged the president, Vladimir Putin, to respond to the drone attack on Tuesday by declaring a state of total war.

Ramzan Kadyrov, the strongman head of Chechnya whose forces have been fighting in Ukraine, said the Kremlin should declare martial law and use all its resources in Ukraine "to sweep away that terrorist gang".

The Wagner mercenary group chief, Yevgeny Prigozhin, similarly said that Moscow had to "mobilise the whole of society right now".

Hardline nationalists have for weeks called on the Kremlin to announce a new round of mobilisation, a widely unpopular move that the Kremlin has so far chosen to avoid.

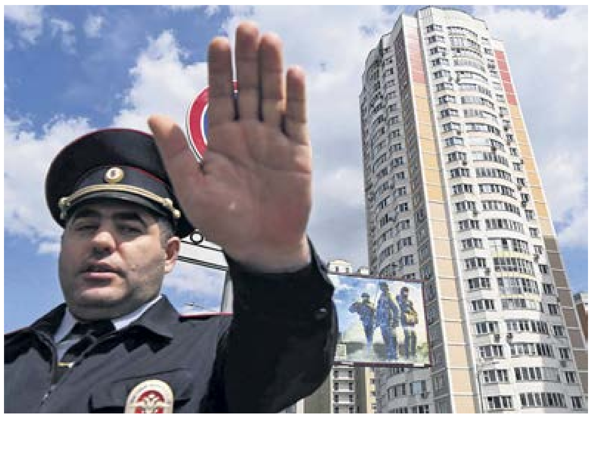
Putin on Tuesday appeared to play down the attack on Moscow, and Russian state media said there was "no panic" in the city after the unprecedented incident.

The raid on Moscow was the latest in a series of drone strikes and sabotage operations behind enemy lines that have intensified in recent weeks ahead of a much anticipated Ukrainian counteroffensive.

The attacks pale in comparison with Russia's deadly assaults on Ukrainian cities that have hit large residential buildings or crowded business centres and killed dozens of people. But they have brought a sense of nervousness to the Russian capital as it becomes evident to Muscovites that the war that Putin unleashed over 15 months ago is coming home.

Ukraine almost never publicly claims responsibility for such attacks, but western intelligence agencies have previously indicated that the strikes originated with the Ukrainian intelligence service.

When asked about the drone strikes on Moscow, the US said it "does not support attacks inside of Russia".



A police officer secures the grounds of a damaged apartment building after a drone attack in Moscow

PHOTOGRAPH: KIRILL KUDRYAVTSEV/AFP/GETTY

Germany, another key ally of Ukraine, yesterday said it deemed Ukrainian attacks on Russian territory to be legitimate in terms of international law. For Britain, the foreign secretary, James Cleverly, said Ukraine had a right to project force beyond its own borders.

Russian media close to the security services wrote that there were as many as 25 drones in Tuesday's attack, that flew over some of the wealthy districts of Moscow that house much of Russia's political elite - and Putin's Novo-Ogaryovo state residence.

The Moscow Times, citing a source close to the Kremlin, reported that the Russian president was at the Novo-Ogaryovo residence during the drone attacks, and was woken up early in the morning by his security services.

In a separate incident yesterday, drones attacked two oil refineries 40 to 50 miles east of Russia's biggest oil export terminals, sparking a fire

Fraud allegations
Mexico exposé in spite of kidnapping
Page 25

Royal wedding fever
Joy ahead of Crown Prince's wedding
Page 26





Ukrainian troops of the 3rd assault brigade train for combat near the front line in Bakhmut
PHOTOGRAPH: EMRE ÇAYLAK/THE GUARDIAN

Macron Negotiations may take priority over Putin war trial

Patrick Wintour
Diplomatic editor

It might not be possible to send Vladimir Putin to The Hague to face war crime charges if he is the only person with whom the west can negotiate an end to the war in Ukraine, Emmanuel Macron has said.

In a wide-ranging speech at an EU leaders' conference in Bratislava, Slovakia, the French president also set out plans for a rapid enlargement of the EU, reconciliation between the east and west of Europe, and a clear path to Ukraine's Nato membership.

He insisted that Russia had lost all legitimacy, but said if the coming Ukraine offensive did not meet its military objectives there would have to be an assessment of the nature of future European support for Ukraine. At the same time he insisted that Ukraine was defending not just its own borders but those of Europe too.

The president also called for continuity in US policy towards Ukraine, but said the EU, by strengthening its own defences, had to prepare for the possibility that a Republican administration might be elected.

In the frankest remarks yet by a European leader about negotiating with Putin, Macron said that "if in a few months we have a window for negotiations, the question will be arbitrage between a trial and a negotiation, and you have to negotiate with the leaders you have de facto. I think negotiations will be a priority … you can put yourself in a position where you say 'I want you to go jail but you are the only one I can negotiate with'."

He said that in the meantime evidence against Russia and its leaders should be assembled and "our security and stability should not be delegated and left at the discretion of US voters". Referring to his claim three years ago that Nato was in the throes of "brain death", he said Putin's invasion of Ukraine had been a wake-up call to which Nato had responded well. But he pointed out, without directly mentioning Turkey, that some Nato members were not imposing sanctions on Russia.

He acknowledged that in the past western Europe had not been sensitive to requests of the east. "Some said you had missed an opportunity to stay quiet. I think we also lost an opportunity to listen to you. This time is over." He was alluding to a remark in 2003 by the former French president Jacques Chirac, who said eastern European nations which sided with the US and Britain over invading Iraq that year, a move opposed by some western allies including France and Germany, had missed a "good opportunity to stay quiet".

Macron predicted that the Nato summit in Vilnius in July would not reach a consensus on Ukraine membership of Nato. "We need to build something between security guarantees provided to Israel and full-fledged Nato membership. We need something tangible… concrete. We need a path to membership."



▲ *Macron set out plans for enlarging the EU with a route in for Ukraine*

at one but causing no damage to the other, Russian officials said.

Oil refineries in Russia have emerged as one of the top targets for Ukraine as Kyiv seeks to degrade Moscow's military capabilities.

Ukraine yesterday said that Russian forces had blown up a road connecting the Ukrainian city of Chernihiv to the Russian city of Bryansk, in a move that signals the concern in Moscow about future cross-border attacks into its territory.

Video footage circulating on telegram showed an explosion near the Three Sisters monument on the border of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus.

"They went from 'We'll take Kyiv in three days' to 'Blow up the road so they don't capture us'," the Ukrainian State Border Guard Service spokesperson, Andriy Demchenko, wrote on Twitter.

Last week, two anti-Kremlin armed groups made up of Russian nationals launched daring cross-border attacks from Ukrainian territory.

Moldova Ministers aim to speed up EU membership

Lisa O'Carroll
Chișinău

Moldova wants to start formal talks on becoming an EU member state and will use a summit of 50 EU and non-member European leaders in its capital, Chișinău, today to underline its desire to accelerate the accession process, its foreign minister said.

Along with Ukraine, Moldova has had official accession candidate status since last year but believes, like its larger neighbour, it can accelerate the years-long process to get a seat in Brussels in the face of continuing threats from Russia.

The foreign minister and head of EU integration, Nicu Popescu, described today's summit of the European Political Community as an "opportunity to show, explain that Moldova is fit for EU membership".

He cited the recent restoration of state control of the airport and the conviction of an oligarch after "multiple delays and stonewalling from our justice department" as examples of the country's determination to deliver on necessary reforms.

"EU accession has been a primary objective for our society for the past two decades. Our objective is by the autumn of this year we will start accession talks," he told reporters.

As heads of state from the EU and non-member European countries descend on the capital for the second meeting of the EPC, Moldova will also be looking to keep financial and political support flowing.

"This is the biggest event of 30 years, a strong sign of commitment to Moldova, a strong sign that Moldova is not alone," said Popescu, a message echoed by the European Commission chief, Ursula von der Leyen.

She later said the EU could see "good progress" was being made on reforms and it would help Chișinău to build the administrative structures needed to join the bloc.

She also announced the EU was tripling financial support for the country, "leveraging" €1.6bn (£1.4bn) of funds it could access on top of the



▲ *Ursula von der Leyen, left, and Moldova's president, Maia Sandu*

€1bn already made available last year. "It is amazing to see that despite all the pressure, Moldova is advancing rapidly and with great quality," Von der Leyen said at a joint news conference with the Moldovan president, Maia Sandu.

"The presence of 50 European leaders, 50 heads of state and government right now in Moldova - the EPC now gives a very strong message," she said. "Moldova is at the heart of Europe. Moldova is Europe. And today and tomorrow, the whole of Europe is Moldova."

She added: "We support you every step of the way on your path to the European Union."

Yesterday, the EU also opened a civilian mission in Chișinău to support the country against Russian disinformation, something Popescu said was familiar to generations of Moldovans pre- and post-Soviet rule. He added: "They want to live in a democracy, a country where they are not beaten up by the police."



▼ *Ethnic Serbs unveil a banner in Zvečan, northern Kosovo, in protest against ethnic Albanian mayors*
PHOTOGRAPH: BOJAN SLAVKOVIC/AP

PM 'would consider elections' in north of Kosovo if violence ends

Patrick Wintour
Diplomatic editor

Kosovo's prime minister, Albin Kurti, has said he is prepared to consider early elections in Serb-majority northern Kosovo, as some British sources expressed concern that the US and EU were making a mistake by threatening their ally with punishment over Kurti's handling of recent violent clashes in the region.

A former UK ambassador said the EU envoy to Kosovo should stand aside, while the foreign affairs select committee chair, Alicia Kearns MP, warned the US against disproportionate punishment of Kurti.

Emmanuel Macron, the French president, said Kurti had made mistakes and he would be meeting him jointly with the German chancellor, Olaf Scholz.

The crisis escalated on Monday after the Pristina government sent in mayors, backed by Kosovan police, to ethnic-Serb-dominated northern municipality offices in the wake of elections that ethnic Serbs had boycotted.

The area's majority ethnic Serbs have never accepted Kosovo's 2008 declaration of independence from Serbia and consider Belgrade their capital, more than two decades after the Kosovo Albanian uprising against repressive Serbian rule.

Ethnic Albanians make up more than 90% of the population in Kosovo, but northern Serbs have long demanded the implementation of an EU-brokered 2013 deal for the creation of an association of autonomous municipalities in their area.

After street clashes on Monday that left 30 members of the Nato Kosovo Force (Kfor) mission injured, Nato said it was sending an extra 700 troops to bolster the 4,000-strong Kfor mission.

Troops have been protecting town halls from Serbian nationalist crowds outside.

The Serbian president, Aleksandar Vučić, has placed his army on full combat alert and ordered units to move closer to the border.

Speaking at a security conference in Bratislava, Kurti said: "If there had been peaceful protest for early elections it would have my understanding, but not mobs with the letter Z [a pro-Russia symbol] that shoot at soldiers and policemen, throw grenades, shouting 'kill, kill'. To this fascist mob, we do not surrender our democratic republic.

"If they want peaceful protests demanding early elections, they have a prime minister who is more than willing to listen to them and perhaps agree with them."

The US and the EU have rebuked Kosovo, normally their ally, for escalating tensions with Serbia, saying the use of force to install mayors in ethnically Serbian areas of Kosovo had undermined efforts to improve troubled bilateral relations.

The US ambassador to Kosovo, Jeff Hovenier, said: "I would be surprised if any Kosovo official would be able to visit the US at this time."

But Kearns showed the difference between US and UK positions, writing: "The posture being taken towards Kosovo is disproportionate. The lack of deterrence towards Belgrade demonstrates a lack of balance, and strategic incoherence. Failing to deter armed militia and their funders and armourers risks emboldening further escalation."

She said Kosovo should be allowed to join the Council of Europe.

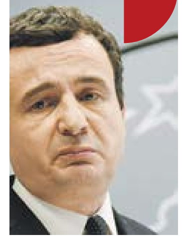
Mark Dickinson, a former British envoy in the west Balkans, said: "What is the shortest face-saving time before [the EU envoy Miroslav] Lajčák can have an overwhelming urge to 'spend more time with his family'?

"I don't mind Kurti (and unfortunately Kosovo) getting some blame and punishment. I can even put up with Vučić escaping it. But if the EU fails to accept that it has also contributed big-time to this disaster, we can only look forward to repeats."

In the most recent round of talks, Vučić, the Serbian president, refused to sign an agreement that provided mutual recognition of Serbia and Kosovo as well as a degree of autonomy for Serbs in northern Kosovo.

'They are shooting at soldiers … We do not surrender our republic to the fascist mob'

Albin Kurti
PM of Kosovo



Judges uphold war crimes convictions of Milošević allies

Peter Beaumont

Two former senior Serbian security officers have had their convictions for war crimes upheld and widened by a tribunal in The Hague, in the last big war crimes trial from the conflicts in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia.

UN judges significantly expanded the convictions of two allies of the late Serbian president Slobodan Milošević, holding them responsible for involvement in crimes – across Bosnia-Herzegovina and in one town in Croatia – as members of a joint plan to ethnically cleanse non-Serbs during the 1990s wars in the Balkans.

The appeals chamber at the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunal overturned their acquittals of involvement in the criminal plan and raised the sentences of Jovica Stanišić, 72, and Franko Simatović, 73, from 12 to 15 years.

Both men were top Serbian security officials who served Milošević as linchpins in his plan to ethnically cleanse large parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia.

The judges overturned a 2021 verdict that said there was not enough evidence to prove Stanišić and Simatović were part of a plot led by Milošević to drive out Croats and Bosnian Muslims and create a Serbian homeland.

The judges rejected appeals on all counts by Stanišić and Simatović. Instead, they ruled that Stanišić and his subordinate Simatović could be held responsible for crimes in several Bosnian municipalities and another in Croatia owing to their role in financing and training Serbian militias during the breakup of Yugoslavia.

Stanišić and Simatović "shared the intent to further the common criminal plan to forcibly and permanently remove the majority of non-Serbs from large areas of Croatia and Bosnia", said the presiding judge, Graciela Gatti Santana.

The verdicts come at the end of a tortuous legal process that became the longest international war crimes process in history, in which the men were tried, acquitted and retried.

Brazilian lawmakers back bill threatening Indigenous land

Tom Phillips
Rio de Janeiro

Indigenous leaders and environmentalists in Brazil have voiced horror and indignation after lawmakers approved controversial legislation on Tuesday which opponents fear will strike a devastating blow to Indigenous communities and isolated tribes.

Members of Brazil's lower house, which is dominated by conservatives, overwhelmingly endorsed bill number 490 by 283 votes to 155.

"You will have Indigenous blood on your hands," the Indigenous congresswoman Célia Xakriabá told its backers as leftwingers protested by smothering their hands in the red dye of annatto seeds.

A succession of white, mostly male lawmakers took the microphone to claim they were supporting the legislation because they considered themselves Indigenous defenders who wanted to help such groups integrate into mainstream society.

But critics say the legislation, which now moves to the senate, poses profound threats to Indigenous communities and the environment.

It could allow road-building, mining, dam construction, agricultural projects and the use of genetically modified crops on protected Indigenous lands, as well as authorising contact with isolated Indigenous groups in certain circumstances.

It would allow the government to reclaim land from Indigenous communities whose "cultural traits" are deemed to have changed, and would also invalidate Indigenous claims to lands such groups could not prove they occupied on the day Brazil's constitution was enacted in 1988.



▲ *An Indigenous woman protests against the legislation in Brasília*

Activists say this "time-limit trick" could scupper legitimate claims for the delimitation of Indigenous lands from groups who had already been evicted from their ancestral lands or whose presence had yet to be recognised by the cut-off date.

The Climate Observatory watchdog said Brazil's parliament had witnessed "its most shameful day since the 2016 impeachment of Dilma Rousseff"; a "show of lies, hatred and racism" which signalled the environmental chaos caused by former president Jair Bolsonaro was far from over.

'People need to know'

Journalist defies the kidnappers over state fraud allegations



◀ *The supposed offices of the construction firm in a multi-million dollar deal with local government*

▼ *Writer Maria Teresa Montaño Delgado says she was kidnapped to stop her exposé*

PHOTOGRAPH: NINA LAKHANI/ THE GUARDIAN

Nina Lakhani
Mexico City

It was a muggy summer's day when the veteran reporter Maria Teresa Montaño Delgado drove 400 miles from Toluca, capital of the state of Mexico (Edomex), to a rundown neighbourhood in the coastal city of Coatzacoalcos.

Montaño carried with her a $35m (£28m) contract for "specialist human capital management" with the government of Edomex - the last bastion of power for the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), which has ruled the state for almost a century. But the offices she was visiting turned out to be a second floor flat in a pastel-pink residential building on a street with boarded up bars and empty lots.

The company - half of a consortium which had contracts with three agencies worth about $55m - existed on paper, but there was no sign of any business. None of the neighbours had heard of it.

"This was a fake firm, part of a scheme to embezzle huge amounts of public money," said Montaño, who runs the small independent news website the Observer. "That's why they tried to silence me."

Coatzacoalcos seemed an unlikely base for a human resources company with multimillion dollar contracts. The contracts were signed in December 2018, when a turf war between rival cartels had helped make the city one of the most violent places in Mexico.

It wasn't the only curious deal that Montaño had uncovered. Trawling through the government's information portal she noticed other contracts worth millions of dollars with firms and individuals across Mexico - many for products and services available locally, such as cleaning, office furniture, building materials and software.

Montaño's reporting was potentially embarrassing for the PRI, which is desperate to hold on to the state in elections on Sunday. But investigating corruption can be deadly. Last year 15 journalists were killed in Mexico, the highest death toll bar Ukraine. This has a chilling effect, with reporters silenced by threats, bribes or blacklists.

"The contracts were signed with firms far away to make it almost impossible for local journalists to physically verify. The government has so much control but I kept asking questions and downloading documents," said Montaño. "That's why I think I was kidnapped."



On 13 August 2021, Montaño's car broke down en route to an appointment in Toluca, so she left it parked at a convenience store and took a bus. By the time she was finished, a rainstorm had broken and Montaño was soaking wet, when a white car that looked like a regular shared taxi pulled up.

A man in the passenger seat pulled out a revolver. He said: "Don't scream and you won't die."

In the back, a second man covered her eyes with her Covid mask and pulled up her jersey to expose her stomach and chest. The driver said: "You're the journalist, aren't you?"

The kidnappers knew where she lived and where she'd left her car. They ransacked Montaño's home, before leaving her blindfolded in a dusty lot at about 11pm. She found her way to a shopping mall and called her family, then reported the kidnapping to the authorities.

It was only later that she realised the assailants had taken her laptops, phone, voice recorder, camera, notebooks and documents - but not any other valuables.

"The message was clear, but I survived - and this information is too important to keep to myself," Montaño said. "Before the people go to vote, they need to know."

Over the past six months, the Guardian and Organised Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) have worked with her as part of an initiative by the Paris-based nonprofit Forbidden Stories to continue the work of threatened and murdered journalists.

> *'This was a fake firm embezzling a lot of public money. That's why they tried to silence me'*
>
> **Maria Teresa Montaña Delgado**
> *Veteran investigative reporter*



Alfredo del Mazo Maza has presided over $300m of allegedly fake deals

The team analysed dozens of contracts issued during the current administration led by Alfredo del Mazo Maza and visited every company address and consulted experts on corruption and politics.

As Edomex prepares to go to the polls, the investigation can reveal the outgoing government issued at least 40 contracts involving at least 15 front and shell companies worth more than $300m. Freedom of information requests for evidence on each procurement were ignored.

The Edomex government said it complied with the law at all times and all contracts were awarded through competitive tender to the "best provider"; it said it respected press freedom and had no prior knowledge of Montaño's kidnap.

All the contracts were authorised by the department of finance, which coordinates the state's procurement process. Approached for comment, the department said it was legally obliged to open tenders to firms across Mexico, and provided a dossier of photocopies of undated photos and documents purporting to prove the contractors were legitimate. But further research revealed inconsistencies in the government's evidence, including offices that were apparently not in use, or used by seemingly unrelated companies.

Together, the contracts illustrate a pattern of "acts and omissions" that suggest an embezzlement scheme involving public officials and private individuals, according to forensic accountant Muna Dora Buchahin Abulhosn.

In one example, the supposed HR firm in Coatzacoalcos - Instituto C&A Intelligent - was awarded three contracts worth $67m with an address in Edomex that doesn't exist. The firm was listed online at a different location - a building on which the company logo has appeared and disappeared several times this year. A phone number for the company is out of service, emails to its address bounced back and its website is defunct.

The Edomex government provided photos showing people outside the building. Consortium reporters have visited the site four times over the past year, but saw no sign of activity in the building. On Monday, a neighbour said he saw workers reattach the company sign.

The findings suggest a new version of an old embezzlement scheme. In 2017, the Federal Audit Office and journalists uncovered an alleged multimillion dollar embezzlement enterprise involving at least 11 federal government agencies, eight public universities and more than 120 fake companies. The case took place during the presidency of Enrique Peña Nieto, former governor of Edomex - and Del Mazo's cousin. Peña Nieto has denied any wrongdoing. No one was charged over the allegations, which implicated several institutions and PRI officials.

Nine of the 40 contracts involved the Edomex department of social development. Alejandra del Moral, who led the department in 2022, is running for governor. Eric Sevilla Montes de Oca, the 2018-20 director, is president of PRI in Edomex and running Moral's campaign. Neither responded to the allegations.

Edomex is Mexico's largest state, with a population of 17 million. Sunday's election matters as it is the only state that the PRI - which ruled the country uninterrupted between 1929 and 2010 - has clung on to, partly thanks to its control of the media. Most news outlets depend on the state government for advertising and off-the-books monthly payments in exchange for non-critical coverage.

A spokesperson for the Del Mazo government said that it "complied with the law at all times with its transparency and accountability obligations" and that procurements for all goods and services had been consolidated under the finance department "to obtain technical and economic advantages".

The government did not respond to specific questions about the investigation's conclusions, or the use of threats, publicity and payments to control the media.

Additional reporting **Maria Teresa Montaño Delgado, Lilia Saúl Rodriguez** *and* **Aïda Delpuech**

Fix the clothes waste crisis, Ghanaian traders urge EU

Isabel Choat

Secondhand clothes dealers from Ghana have visited Brussels to lobby for Europe-wide legislation to compel the fashion industry to help address the "environmental catastrophe" of dumping vast amounts of textiles in the west African country.

The traders from Kantamanto in Accra, one of the world's largest secondhand clothing markets, met the Swedish Green party MEP Alice Bah Kuhnke, environmental groups and representatives from the European Commission and the European Environment Bureau to argue that the proposed extended producer responsibility (EPR) regulation should ensure Ghana receives funds towards managing the 100 tonnes of clothing discarded at the market every day.

Producers are obliged by EPR policies to contribute to the disposal of waste generated by their products. France is currently the only country in Europe with an EPR that covers the textile industry.

Critics say the policy does little for "end-of-line" countries such as Ghana. The fee paid by clothing producers is just €0.06 (5p) an item, and the funds do not "follow" exports to countries such as Ghana, which suffer the consequences of over-production in wealthy countries.

The Kantamanto traders want the draft EPR policy – due to be submitted this month – to increase the fee to a minimum of €0.50 for each item, and to guarantee a fair portion of the money goes to the end-of-line countries, including at least 10% towards a fund to clean up previous damage.

Kantamanto covers about 7 hectares (17 acres), handling about 15m garments a week and providing work for about 30,000 people.

Retailers buy and sort through 55kg (121lb) bales of clothing – most of it is "deadstock" (clothes stored for years but never worn) or items donated to charities or left in recycling bins. About 6m of the better-quality items are sold or upcycled in the market every week, but about 40% is discarded as waste. Lower-quality "fast fashion" is pushing that figure up, eroding the traders' earnings and sending many into debt.

"Kantamanto makes visible the problem that exists in Europe," said Samuel Oteng, a community engagement manager with the Or Foundation, a US environmental organisation based in Accra that works with the market and funded the group's visit. "But Kantamanto also has the solutions. I've seen the resilience of Kantamanto, but the support and recognition is not there."

100

The number of tonnes of western clothing discarded at Kantamanto market, Ghana, every day

The traders want new legislation to acknowledge the role of Kantamanto's workers in recycling the global north's cast-offs.

Solomon Noi, part of the delegation and the director of waste management for Accra metropolitan assembly, said it was impossible for the city to cope with the volume of market waste. Between 2010 and 2020, 10 rubbish dumps in the city were closed after reaching capacity.

Today authorities transport the waste to Adepa dump, 30 miles north of Kantamanto, but they can only handle about 30% of it. The rest ends up in ditches and drains, leaching dyes into the sea and rivers, and covering beaches with vast tangles of clothing washing up on the beach.

"Turtles cannot come to the beach, the coral is dying, the fishers can't fish. It's an environmental catastrophe," said Noi, speaking at the ChangeNOW conference in Paris, which the delegation visited after Brussels.

"We rely on our taxes [to raise money] to manage the waste, but taxes go to education, health. Little is left to manage textile waste. Why should I work hard to get my taxes to get rid of [the global north's] waste? We have had enough."

Fireworks and free events stoke up royal wedding fever across Jordan

Agence France-Presse
Amman

Jordan's Crown Prince Hussein is to be married today in a royal wedding that has already been greeted with fireworks, concerts and a social media frenzy in the desert kingdom.

The eldest son of King Abdullah II will marry his Saudi fiancee, Rajwa al-Saif, in a grand ceremony, with monarchs of the region, the US first lady, Jill Biden, and the king of the Netherlands among the guests.

On a significant day for the kingdom, which is a key western ally, the royal red motorcade, reserved for special occasions, will cross the capital, Amman, in celebration.

In the lead-up to the wedding of the man next in line to Jordan's throne, the country has been gripped by royal fever. Photos of Saif's bridal henna party took the internet by storm last week as she wore a white gown with an Arabic verse embroidered in gold: "When I see you, life becomes sweet."

The Royal Hashemite Court, the kingdom's political body, published a YouTube video of Hussein's mother, Queen Rania, and his sisters, Princesses Salma and Iman, singing and dancing with guests at the party.

"Like any mother, I have long dreamed of his wedding day," the queen said in a speech, telling her subjects: "Hussein is your son, and you are his family, and this is your wedding". After the party, drones hovering over Amman formed the shape of a crown in the sky.



▲ *Rajwa al-Saif, the Saudi fiancee of Jordan's Crown Prince Hussein, at a pre-wedding party; below, a man wearing a souvenir T-shirt*
MAIN PHOTOGRAPH: AFP/GETTY



Such public displays may be common for western royals, but they are a rarity in the Arab world, where conservative monarchies seldom share details of their private lives.

The western-educated crown prince, who became heir apparent at the age of 15, has long grown accustomed to the spotlight. Hussein has 4 million followers on his Instagram account, where he shares eclectic photographs of hiking trips, military training and royal functions.

On Monday, musicians from across the Arab world flocked to the Jordanian capital to perform at a free concert to honour the couple, among them the Lebanese star Ragheb Alama and the Egyptian singer and actor Tamer Hosny. Among the concertgoers, Suhad al-Idrisi, her sister and her niece all wore T-shirts that read: "We are happy for Hussein."

"We have not witnessed such moments of joy in a long time in Jordan," said Idrisi, 45.

King Abdullah II, who is 61 and has reigned since 1999, had long groomed his eldest son to succeed him, bringing him along to important visits and meetings, the former information minister Samih Maaytah said.

The Jordanian king has wide-ranging powers in the country of 11 million people, which is a parliamentary monarchy, and also acts as supreme leader of the armed forces.

Hussein followed in his father's footsteps by attending Sandhurst and then studied history at Georgetown University in Washington DC. His bride-to-be studied architecture at Syracuse University in New York.

In brief

Germany

Extreme skier found dead in Himalayas



A leading German mountaineer and extreme skier has been found dead on the world's third highest mountain, five days after going missing in the Himalayas.

The body of Luis Stitzinger was discovered on Tuesday on Kanchenjunga at a height of 8,400 metres, the head Sherpa of the company that organised a climb to find him told the Himalayan Times.

Stitzinger, 54, who had made a name for himself with his spectacular skiing descents, had reached the peak of Kanchenjunga last week. Philip Oltermann *Berlin*

India

Man fined for draining reservoir to find phone

An Indian official who drained a reservoir to retrieve a phone he dropped while taking a selfie has been fined more than £500 by the government. Rajesh Vishwas, a food inspector, had dropped his new phone, worth about £1,000, into the Paralkot reservoir in Chhattisgarh state during a picnic with friends. He hired a diesel pump and emptied the reservoir of millions of litres of water.

Vishwas claimed his phone contained sensitive government information, and said he had been given "verbal permission" to pump the water into a nearby canal by the water resources department. The department later said it had given permission for a few feet to be drained but "not that much". Hannah Ellis-Petersen

France

Olympics 'not to blame for social problems'

France's sports minister has warned against making the 2024 Olympics in Paris a scapegoat for the country's social difficulties.

Amélie Oudéa-Castéra was speaking after rows over the high cost of tickets for the Games and suggestions that homeless people were to be moved out of the city to make room in budget hotels for sports fans.

"We shouldn't make the Olympics the scapegoat of all our frustrations. It's important not to distort the facts and blame the Olympic Games for all our social problems," Oudéa-Castéra said yesterday. Kim Willsher *Paris*

FTSE 100	All share	Dow Indl	Nikkei 225	£/€	£/$
-75.93	-37.95	-210.87	-440.28	1.1626	1.2394
7446.14	4066.80	32831.91	30887.88	+0.0058	-0.0016

Business

UK and US 'poised to fall into recession' as rising interest rates hinder growth

Richard Partington
Economics correspondent

Stubbornly high inflation and higher borrowing costs are poised to drive the economies of the Britain, Germany and the US into recession, the leading credit rating agency Moody's has warned.

In a downbeat forecast for growth across advanced G20 economies, it said a ramping up of interest rates by central banks on both sides of the Atlantic was expected to weigh on economic growth this year.

"We expect very weak growth in key advanced economies in particular, including mild recessions in the US, UK and Germany, and stagnant economic activity in France and Italy," Moody's said in a report.

It comes as the world's most influential central banks attempt to squeeze high inflation out of the system through the toughest round of rate increases in decades, amid concern over the potential for persistent pressure on living standards.

Official estimates yesterday revealed a mixed picture across the eurozone, underscoring the challenge facing the European Central Bank, after French inflation eased to its lowest level in a year but Italy's overshot analyst expectations.

France's annual inflation rate fell by more than expected to 6% in May, down from 6.9% in April. However, inflation fell by significantly less than anticipated in Italy to stand at 8.1% in May, down from 8.7% a month earlier.

German inflation fell by more than expected to 6.3%, down from 7.6% a month earlier. The figures followed a bigger than expected decline in Spain, with a fall in inflation to 2.9%, raising hopes that price pressures across the eurozone could cool rapidly this year.

Official estimates for the 20-country bloc as a whole are due today.

Rory Fennessy, an economist at the consultancy Oxford Economics, said: "It is likely that eurozone inflation came down more than expected in May, closer to 6% from 7% in April. If inflation in June surprises to the downside, the chances of a July rate hike will diminish significantly."

Christine Lagarde, the president of the ECB, warned this month that the eurozone's central bank still had "more ground to cover" on interest rates, after increasing its key deposit rate by a quarter point to 3.25%. "We are not pausing. That's very clear."

It comes after revised official figures for Germany last week revealed the country slipped into recession at the start of this year, while concern is also mounting over the strength of the UK and the US economies. The technical definition of a recession is two consecutive quarters of shrinking gross domestic product.

Official figures last week showed inflation remained stubbornly high in the UK as households come under pressure from the fastest annual rise in food prices since the late 1970s. Britain has the highest inflation rate in the G7 group of advanced economies, after a fall to 8.7% in April, down from 10.1% in March.

UK inflation figures for May are due to be published next month, with analysts warning that Rishi Sunak's target to halve the inflation rate by the end of this year is increasingly at risk.

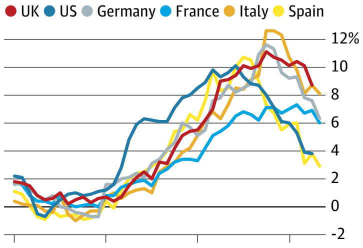
Economists said last week that Britain's high levels of inflation were likely to persuade the Bank of England to push interest rates above 5% to "engineer" the conditions for a recession to bring down inflation.

Moody's said it expected Threadneedle Street to raise its key base rate by "at least" another quarter-point to 4.75% when the Bank's policymakers next meet in June.

US consumer prices have been slowing in recent months, dropping to an annual inflation rate of 4.9% in April. However, analysts have warned the US Federal Reserve could be forced to keep interest rates at high levels for longer than previously anticipated to squeeze persistent inflation out of the system.

Economists are divided on whether the US could fall into recession in the second half of this year or in 2024. However, some suggest the country could manage a "soft landing" from high inflation without a recession.

The UK has a higher inflation rate than many comparable economies
Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices, annual % change



Source: Eurostat and various government statistics authorities. (May data not yet published for UK and US)



Tower of power An employee works on the tower for a wind turbine at a factory in Lianyungang, in China's Jiangsu province. Earlier this year, China unveiled the parts for the world's biggest wind turbine, with a 260-metre diameter.

PHOTOGRAPH: AFP/GETTY

FTSE flotation of chemicals firm could raise £650m for Turkish tycoon

Rupert Neate

The family of a Turkish billionaire who owns a football stadium named after the newly re-elected president, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, could be in line for £650m after floating an industrial company in London.

The family of Turgay Ciner, 67, who has built up an estimated $1.6bn (£1.3bn) empire spanning mining, chemicals, shipping, media and football, controls WE Soda, which yesterday announced plans for an initial public offering (IPO) on the London stock market expected to value the company at up to $8bn.

The flotation of 10% of the shares in WE Soda, the world's largest producer of natural soda ash, which is used in glass manufacturing, could generate $800m for the family's Ciner Group conglomerate. The company said it would use the proceeds of the flotation to pay down debts in other businesses in the group.

The rare London IPO could be so large that WE Soda – chaired by Ciner's wife, Didem – could be propelled into the FTSE 100 index of the largest UK-quoted companies.

The government is attempting to make London a more attractive place for international companies to list their stock, after a string of businesses opted to float overseas, frequently in the US.

Susannah Streeter, head of money and markets at Hargreaves Lansdown, said: "The stock market launch of the industrial materials maker will be the FTSE's first major IPO this year, but although this is a much needed drop in a parched landscape, it's still unlikely to lead to a flood of immediate listings due to the still volatile nature of market sentiment."



▲ *Turgay Ciner with his wife, Didem*

£6.4bn
Predicted valuation of WE Soda when its initial public offering on London's stock market goes ahead

Ciner began his business empire by importing Mercedes-Benz cars from Germany at the age of 28 with his brother Tuncer, according to Turkish newspaper Haberler.

He moved into media in a partnership with Sabah Group in 1998. Now Ciner Media Group owns Habertürk newspaper, Habertürk TV and Habertürk Radio and co-owns the Turkish-language Bloomberg HT. Many Ciner outlets have a reputation for supporting Erdoğan, who was re-elected on Sunday.

Alasdair Warren, chief executive of WE Soda, said Ciner was apolitical. "The way in which the Ciner group conducts its business is to be politically agnostic," he said. "The IPO plan has been something we have been working towards for several years. We focus on the merits of [the] company, not speculating on [the] outcome of the election."

Turgay Ciner owns Istanbul football team Kasımpaşa Spor Kulübü, which is based near where Erdoğan grew up and whose ground is named the Recep Tayyip Erdoğan Stadium. Warren declined to comment on whether the name reflected any relationship between the two men.

The family are understood to own at least three homes in London, including a villa in Holland Park worth around £40m.

Business view
Nouriel Roubini

For all Biden's assurances, the US and China are on a collision course that could end in conflict

After the May G7 summit in Hiroshima, the US president, Joe Biden, claimed that he expected a "thaw" in relations with China. Yet, despite some recent official bilateral meetings - with the US secretary of the Treasury, Janet Yellen, expressing hopes for a visit to China soon - relations remain icy.

In fact, far from thawing, the new cold war is getting colder, and the G7 summit itself magnified Chinese concerns about the US pursuing a strategy of "comprehensive containment, encirclement and suppression". Unlike previous gatherings, when G7 leaders offered mostly talk and little action, this summit turned out to be one of the most important in the group's history.

The US, Japan, Europe and their allies made it clearer than ever that they intended to join forces to counter China. Moreover, Japan, which holds the group's rotating presidency, made sure to invite key leaders from the global south, not least the Indian prime minister, Narendra Modi.

In reaching out to rising and middle powers, the G7 wants to persuade others to join its more muscular response to China's rise.

While India, which holds this year's G20 presidency, has taken a neutral position on Russia's war in Ukraine, it has long been locked in a strategic rivalry with China, owing partly to the fact that the two countries share a long border, much of which is disputed. Thus, even if India does not become a formal ally to western countries, it will continue to position itself as an independent, rising global power whose interests are more aligned with the west than with China and China's de facto allies, Russia, Iran, North Korea and Pakistan.

Japan also invited Indonesia, South Korea - with which it is pursuing a diplomatic thaw, driven by common concerns about China - Brazil (another key global south power), the African Union chair, Azali Assoumani, and the Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy. The message was clear: the Sino-Russian friendship "without limits" is having serious consequences for how other powers perceive China.

Going further, the G7 devoted a substantial portion of its final communique to explaining how it would confront and deter China in the years ahead. Among other things, the document decries Chinese policies of "economic coercion" and stresses the importance of an Indo-Pacific partnership to thwart China's efforts to dominate Asia. It criticises Chinese expansionism in the East and South China Seas, and includes a clear warning to China not to attack or invade Taiwan.

In taking steps to "de-risk" their relations with China, western leaders have settled on language only slightly less aggressive than "decoupling". But more than the argot has changed. According to the communique, western containment efforts will be accompanied by a policy to engage the global south with investments in clean-energy transition, lest key countries there be drawn into China's sphere of influence.

No wonder China could not contain its rage against the G7. The Hiroshima summit comes at a time when Nato has begun its own pivot towards Asia, and when the Aukus alliance, comprising Australia, the UK and the US, is gearing up to confront China in the Pacific.

Meanwhile, the western-Chinese tech and economic war has continued to escalate. Japan is imposing restrictions on semiconductor exports to China that are no less draconian than those put in place by the US, which is pressing Taiwan and South Korea to follow suit. In response, China has banned chips made by the US-based Micron.

> *The Chinese would like to forget that the current escalation owes as much to their own aggressive policies as to US strategy*

The risk now is that China, at pains to close its tech gap with the west, will leverage its dominant role in producing and refining rare-earth metals - which are crucial for the green transition - to retaliate against the US sanctions and trade restrictions.

Of course, the Chinese would like to forget that the current escalation owes as much, if not more, to their own aggressive policies as to US strategy. In recent interviews marking his 100th birthday, Henry Kissinger - the architect of the US's "opening to China" in 1972 - has warned that unless the two countries find a new strategic understanding, they will remain on a collision course. The deeper the freeze, the greater the risk of a violent crack-up.

Nouriel Roubini is professor emeritus at the Stern school of business and the author of Megathreats: Ten Dangerous Trends That Imperil Our Future and How to Survive Them. © Project Syndicate



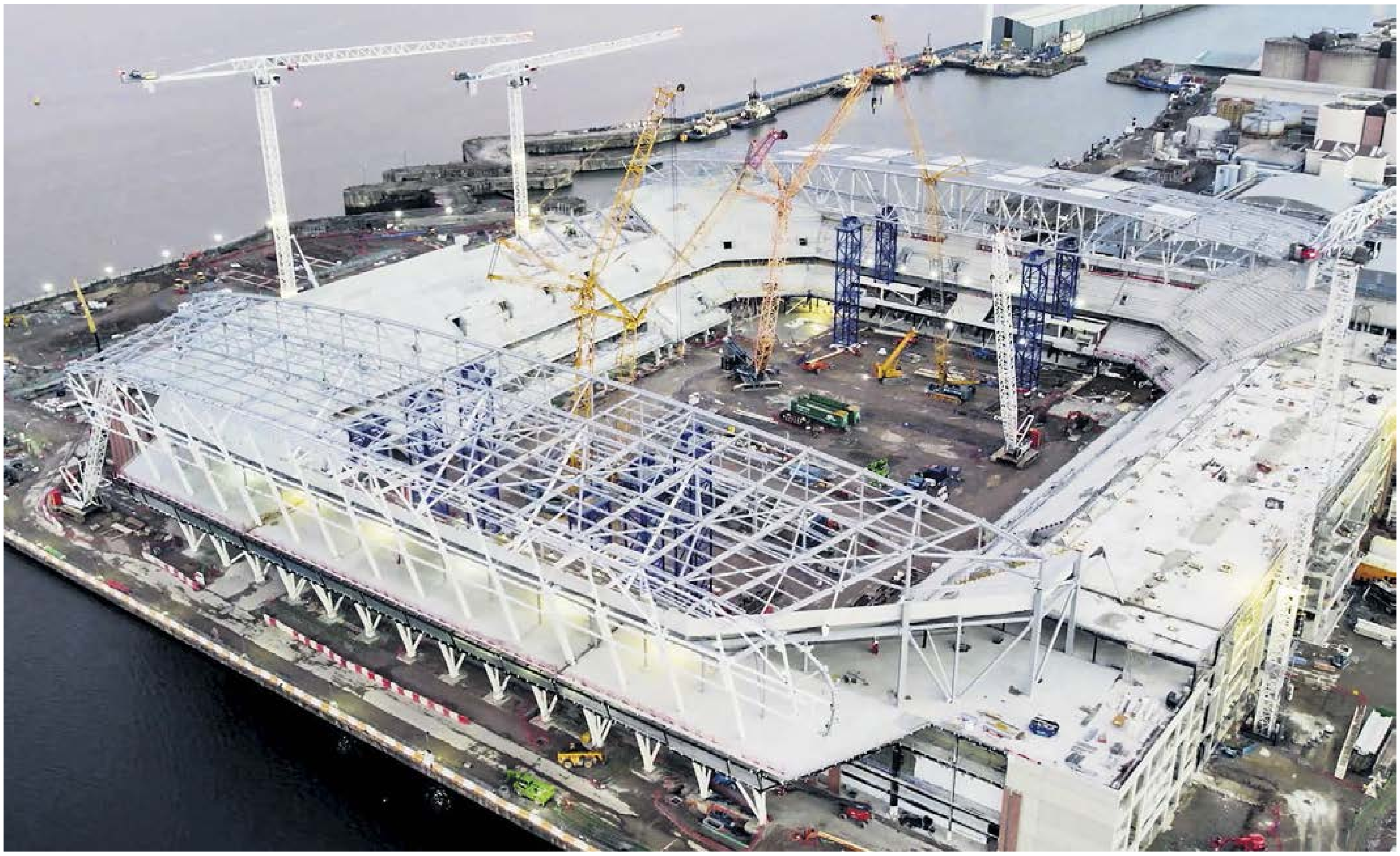
Fresh takes on new trends

Chanté Joseph returns to Pop Culture with more sharp-witted analysis, special guests, and insights into what's trending. The podcast has covered everything from Meghan Markle's racial struggles in the UK to Jameela Jamil's stand against heroin chic. Now, Chanté's back for more unique takes on the latest stories and what they mean for us day-to-day.



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▼ *Everton's new stadium under construction in Liverpool's docks, seen in a still from a club video*
PHOTOGRAPH: EVERTON FC

Sanctions office 'reviewing Everton owner's finances'

Simon Goodley

The Treasury's sanctions police have been reviewing the finances of Everton Football Club's owner, Farhad Moshiri, the Guardian understands.

Moshiri appears to have become a person of interest to the Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation (OFSI) because of his links to Alisher Usmanov, the Russian-Uzbek billionaire who was sanctioned by the UK, the EU and the US after last year's invasion of Ukraine.

Usmanov has been barred from entering the UK since September 2021 after his presence was "not deemed conducive to the public good".

The apparent interest in Moshiri coincides with months of reporting by the Guardian, which has raised questions about the influence Usmanov has exerted over Moshiri and the Premier League club, including how the Russian tycoon came to attend job interviews with a series of prospective Everton managers before March 2022.

It also follows a Guardian report that revealed how the club's auditor, BDO, stepped away from signing off the club's accounts last year - a decision sources said was related to the ownership of the Premier League team.

The Guardian understands that BDO's concerns led to the OFSI being notified about Moshiri, who has hired an expert sanctions lawyer at Peters & Peters - one of the UK's largest law firms - according to correspondence sent to the Guardian on Moshiri's behalf.

The news of the OFSI's apparent interest in Moshiri's finances has emerged after the team narrowly avoided relegation from the Premier League and while Moshiri is attempting to find investment to bankroll the club and complete its new stadium.

It is understood that an investment offer on the table would result in Moshiri - who is estimated to have ploughed £750m into Everton - losing control of the club without being paid a penny, according to sources close to the negotiations.

Any lack of payment to Moshiri could raise questions about whether Everton is being treated in a similar manner to Chelsea FC when it was acquired from the sanctioned oligarch Roman Abramovich last year. Abramovich was prevented by the UK government from benefiting financially from the sale of the London club.

The OFSI, which has become more high-profile since the UK started sanctioning Russian oligarchs in March 2022, says its role is to intervene "to disrupt attempted breaches" of sanctions law and that it has the power to "impose monetary penalties for breaches of financial sanctions". Law enforcement bodies can also prosecute any alleged breaches in the criminal courts.

Last month the Sunday Times' 2023 Rich List estimated Moshiri was worth about £1.6bn. Aside from Everton, he is listed as the owner of UK property valued at more than



▲ *Farhad Moshiri, left, the owner of Everton, and Alisher Usmanov*

£100m, including Liverpool's Royal Liver Building and a series of luxury homes in north London.

In January, Moshiri told an Everton fans group: "The club is not for sale but I've been talking to top investors, really quality, to bridge a gap on a stadium. I can do it myself and the reason I want to do [it] is to bring top sport investors into Everton."

However, the Guardian understands that Moshiri's UK bank closed his account last year, seemingly because of his connections to Usmanov.

94%

Stake in Everton that Moshiri now holds, having bought just under 50% of the club in 2016

£1.6bn

Moshiri's estimated net worth, according to the Sunday Times Rich List published last month

Moshiri declined to comment on the OFSI's apparent interest in his finances or the status of his UK bank account. The Treasury said that neither it nor the OFSI commented on individual cases.

Questions about the links between Moshiri and Usmanov's finances have lingered for years.

The pair previously owned a joint shareholding in Arsenal FC, with Moshiri selling his stake to Usmanov in 2016 to buy an initial holding of almost 50% in Everton.

However, records in the Paradise Papers leak suggest Moshiri's original Arsenal shareholding was funded by a "gift" from Usmanov, which raised questions about whether the 69-year-old Russian oligarch's funds first bought Everton shares. Moshiri, 68, who is a British national, has always insisted the leaked information is wrong and it was his money that made the investment. He has since increased his Everton stake to 94%.

Moshiri and Usmanov have also always denied that Usmanov has owned or controlled Everton, while Moshiri further disputes that Usmanov has attended job interviews with prospective Everton managers, some of whom have said they were left with the impression that Usmanov was in charge of the club.

This month, the Guardian also revealed that Usmanov had been barred from the UK, six months before he was sanctioned by the Foreign Office because of his alleged connections to Russia's president, Vladimir Putin.

Everton said it was aware that Usmanov, then a major club sponsor, had been barred from the UK but that the club had not broken any laws or Premier League rules.

In March 2022, Usmanov described the Foreign Office sanctions citation as "false and defamatory allegations damaging my honour, dignity and business reputation", and vowed to fight it.

CBI Focus should be on making staff feel safe to speak out

Juliette Garside
Deputy business editor

The voice of business has spoken. The messaging, however, is mixed. After a period of turmoil, during which most of its work was suspended, the Confederation of British Industry has outlined plans for an overhaul of its culture and governance. Its members will give their verdict in a confidence vote, with the results due next week.

The director general, Rain Newton-Smith, brought in to steady the ship, made her pitch in a prospectus published yesterday.

More than 50 companies, from John Lewis to Aviva, have suspended or cancelled their membership. The government and the Labour party have paused all official contact. Has Newton-Smith done enough to win them back?

The allegations could not be more serious. They concern sexual misconduct, including rape, by male employees. The women who have complained say their concerns were not properly dealt with. The CBI's president, Brian McBride, has conceded that its managers had tried to find resolution "when we should have removed offenders from our business".

In some quarters the tone has been less apologetic. Carolyn Fairbairn, the director general until 2020, hit out at the board in the Sunday Times recently for drawing "a direct link from a toxic culture to assaults on women".

Newton-Smith seems to have positioned herself somewhere between the two. We are told Principia, a consultancy brought in to review the CBI's working environment, has concluded blanket descriptions of a toxic culture were not accurate. Another consultant, Ffion Hague, will review governance.

Staff must believe the right procedures will be followed if they raise a complaint. The CBI leadership has taken some important steps. Employees suspended following an investigation have now left.

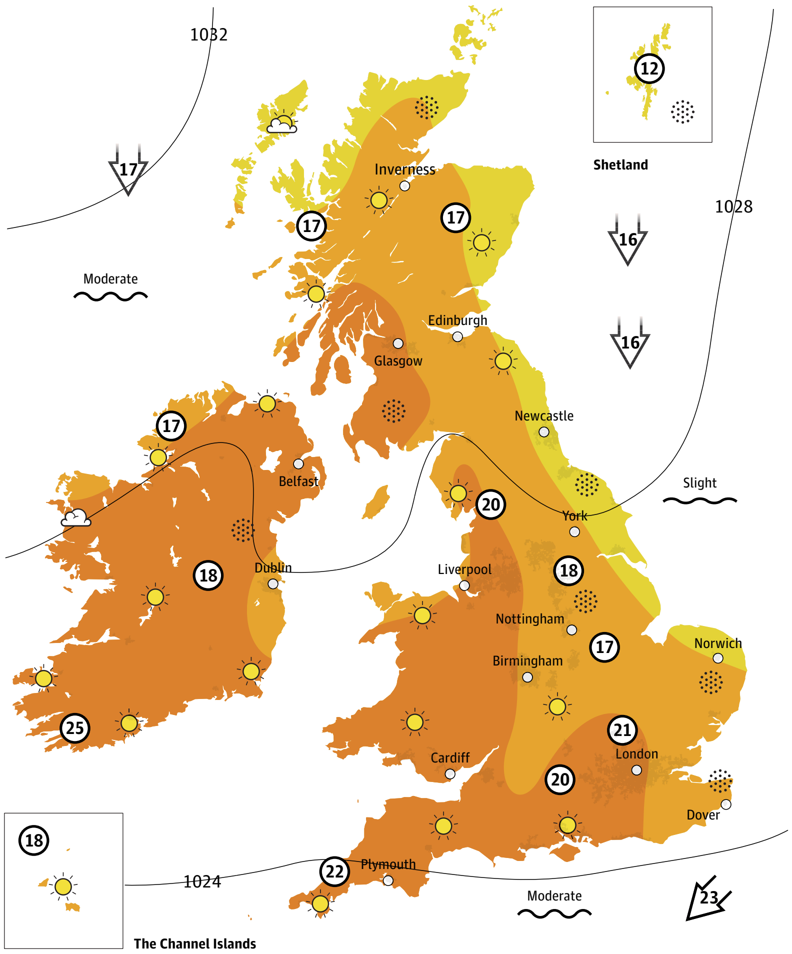
However, speaking up is a huge career risk for more junior staff. Unless they feel safe in calling out misconduct, they won't do it. And if they don't do it, the organisation is unlikely to change. When pressed on this, Newton-Smith said she was laying the foundations for a "strong speak-up environment". But that was not her central message. It probably should have been.

Weather
Thursday 1 June 2023

UK and Ireland Noon today

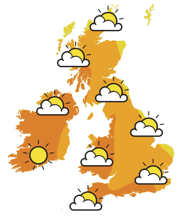
Sunny · Mist · Fog · Sunny intervals · Hazy · Mostly cloudy · Overcast/dull · Sunny showers · Sunny and heavy showers · Light showers · Rain · Sleet · Light snow · Snow showers · Heavy snow · Ice · Thundery rain · Thundery showers · Temperature, ºC · Wind speed, mph · Windy

Temperature scale: 35C, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, 5, 0, -5, -10, -15, -20

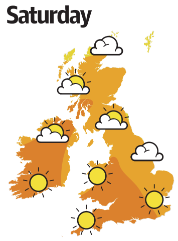


Forecast

Low 8 High 20
Tomorrow



Low 7 High 21
Saturday



Carbon count

Daily atmospheric CO_2 readings from Mauna Loa, Hawaii (ppm):

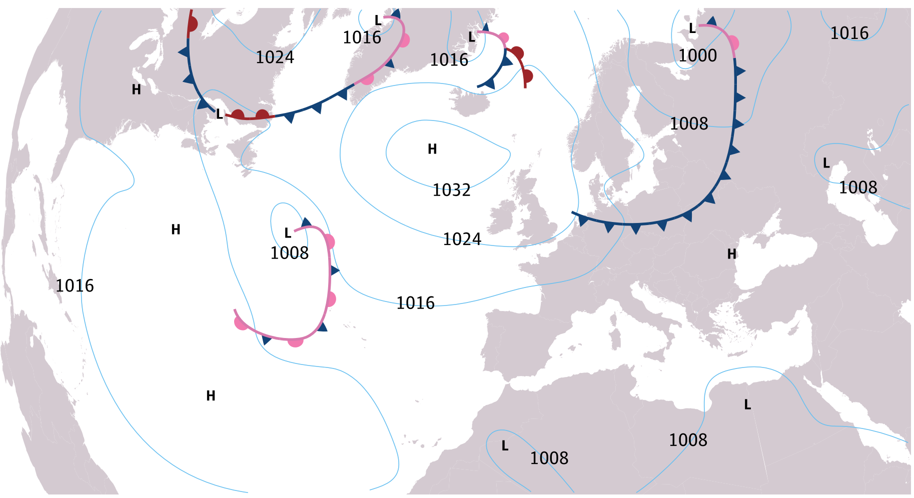
Latest	
30 May 2023	424.66
Weekly average	
21 May 2023	423.91
31 May 2022	421.31
31 May 2013	400.25
Pre-industrial base	280
Safe level	350

Source: NOAA-ESRL

Around the UK

	Lows and highs		Precipitation	Air pollution
London	9	21	0%	Low
Manchester	8	20	0%	Low
Edinburgh	7	16	0%	Low
Belfast	9	22	0%	Low
Birmingham	7	19	0%	Low
Brighton	9	18	0%	Low
Bristol	9	21	0%	Low
Cardiff	9	21	0%	Low
Newcastle	6	14	25%	Low
Penzance	12	19	0%	Low

Atlantic front



Cold front
Warm front
Occluded front
Trough

High tides

Source: © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Times are local UK times

Aberdeen	**0006**	3.6m	**1215**	3.7m
Avonmouth	**0541**	11.2m	**1812**	11.5m
Barrow	**1012**	8.1m	**2236**	8.2m
Belfast	**0948**	3.2m	**2218**	3.1m
Cobh	**0357**	3.6m	**1621**	3.6m
Cromer	**0521**	4.3m	**1724**	4.4m
Dover	**0948**	5.8m	**2202**	6.1m
Dublin	**1024**	3.6m	**2244**	3.7m
Galway	**0353**	4.3m	**1614**	4.5m
Greenock	**1053**	3.1m	**2354**	3.0m
Harwich	**1029**	3.6m	**2245**	3.5m
Holyhead	**0904**	4.9m	**2134**	5.0m
Hull	**0500**	6.4m	**1710**	6.5m
Leith	**0109**	4.8m	**1331**	4.9m
Liverpool	**0948**	8.2m	**2214**	8.3m
London Bridge	**0007**	6.2m	**1233**	6.3m
Lossiemouth	**1030**	3.5m	**2304**	3.6m
Milford Haven	**0447**	6.0m	**1713**	6.1m
Newquay	**0342**	5.9m	**1607**	6.1m
North Shields	**0209**	4.3m	**1418**	4.4m
Oban	**0430**	3.4m	**1702**	3.4m
Penzance	**0314**	4.8m	**1540**	4.9m
Plymouth	**0412**	4.8m	**1645**	4.8m
Portsmouth	**1015**	4.1m	**2236**	4.4m
Southport	**0910**	7.9m	**2142**	8.0m
Stornoway	**0534**	4.1m	**1807**	4.2m
Weymouth	**0425**	0.9m	**1659**	0.9m
Whitby	**0241**	4.8m	**1450**	4.9m
Wick	**0959**	3.0m	**2234**	3.0m
Workington	**1013**	7.2m	**2240**	7.4m

Sun & Moon



Sun rises	0449
Sun sets	2107
Moon rises	1809
Moon sets	0318
Full Moon	4 June

AccuWeather.com
Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather** ©2023

Lighting up

Belfast	2150 to 0455
Birm'ham	2119 to 0450
Brighton	2105 to 0452
Bristol	2118 to 0459
Carlisle	2138 to 0440
Cork	2143 to 0520
Dublin	2143 to 0503
Glasgow	2151 to 0440
Harlech	2131 to 0457
Inverness	2201 to 0426
London	2107 to 0448
M'chester	2126 to 0447
Newcastle	2134 to 0434
Norwich	2108 to 0437
Penzance	2123 to 0517

Weatherwatch

Rapid warming in the Arctic has opened up faster shipping channels through the fabled North-West Passage in recent decades, but a study reveals that the reduction in ice is likely to lead to increased levels of fog, potentially removing the benefits of these shortcuts.

As sea ice melts, more of the underlying warmer water comes into contact with cold air, increasing the chances of water vapour condensing into fog.

Xianyao Chen from the Ocean University of China and colleagues plugged historical fog data into climate models to assess how much the fogginess along the North-West Passage (through the Canadian archipelago) and the Northern Sea Route (along the Russian Arctic coast) is likely to increase.

Their findings, published in Geophysical Research Letters, show that fog is already slowing shipping along these routes, and by 2100 increased fogginess could add three days to the North-West Passage route under a moderate 3C warming scenario.

The results suggest that many of the current projections for Arctic shipping routes could be too optimistic in terms of the amount of time and money they can save.
Kate Ravilious

Around the world

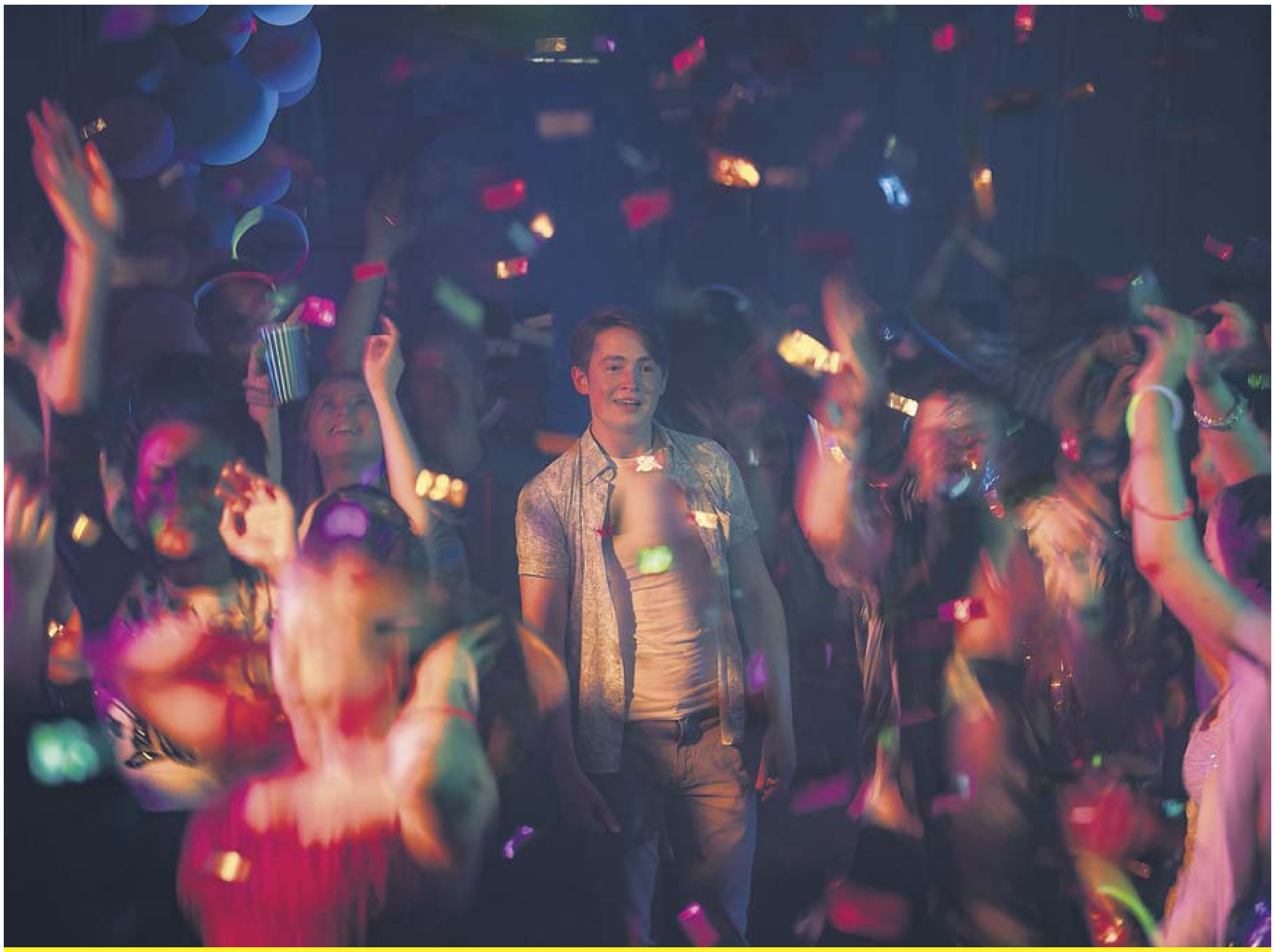
Algiers	25	Lisbon	25
Ams'dam	16	Madrid	23
Athens	27	Malaga	25
Auckland	18	Melb'rne	15
B Aires	18	Mexico C	30
Bangkok	36	Miami	28
Barcelona	22	Milan	28
Basra	41	Mombasa	30
Beijing	33	Moscow	22
Berlin	22	Mumbai	34
Bermuda	23	N Orleans	30
Brussels	21	Nairobi	24
Budapest	27	New Delhi	33
C'hagen	20	New York	28
Cairo	39	Oslo	19
Cape Town	20	Paris	27
Chicago	31	Perth	18
Corfu	27	Prague	25
Dakar	28	Reykjavik	12
Dhaka	37	Rio de J	25
Dublin	17	Rome	25
Florence	27	Shanghai	29
Gibraltar	23	Singapore	31
H Kong	33	Stockh'm	13
Harare	26	Strasb'g	28
Helsinki	12	Sydney	22
Istanbul	26	Tel Aviv	32
Jo'burg	16	Tenerife	27
K Lumpur	33	Tokyo	23
K'mandu	33	Toronto	31
Kabul	26	Vancouv'r	18
Kingston	30	Vienna	26
Kolkata	41	Warsaw	25
L Angeles	19	Wash'ton	30
Lagos	30	Well'ton	17
Lima	23	Zurich	26

Cricket
Ireland's Tucker on facing England at Lord's
Page 37 →

Football
Was Wiegman right to overlook Houghton?
Louise Taylor, page 34 →



Sport



▲ *Heartstopper on Netflix embraces differences onscreen and where being LGBTQ+ is the new normal*
ROB YOUNGSON/NETFLIX

Against the tide

Swimming now has wave of diversity to drown out Little Mermaid protests

Michael Gunning



Disney has always been at the heart of breaking down barriers in society and swims against the tide in its diverse casting and smashes the patriarchal system out of the water. As Disney celebrates its 100th year, I can't help but reflect on what Disney has taught me; that anything is possible. Disney might be fiction, but our youth of today look up to the characters as role models so who Disney represent and how they represent them is real. That means the repercussions of racism and abuse towards Disney characters can be damaging and impactful as racism towards people.

Last week, Disney's The Little Mermaid hit our screens and I'm excited for the world to see it, but the movie has been a hot topic of conversation over the past year as Halle Bailey, a talented black actor, takes on the role as Ariel. It's disappointing, to say the least, that waves of complaints and dislikes have come to the surface simply because Ariel was white in the original cartoon movie, but to hear the common myths I've been trying so hard to shift for many years in sport has hit me harder than I expected.

I grew up with the familiar phrase that "black people don't swim" and "black people sink in water", but to still hear these comments regarding a movie in today's society is very disappointing. I decided to step away from competitive sport last year and it took me a sporting lifetime to say I was proud to be a swimmer, but I know negative stereotypes can act as a barrier to people participating in sport.

Why set your children up to fail in a sport they won't succeed at? For people of colour, this is the question many parents will ask themselves before putting their children in swimming lessons. Since retiring, I've made it my mission to provide opportunities for the disadvantaged and underprivileged children and further eliminate the negative stereotypes around black boys and girls swimming.

The work I'm doing as a Speedo ambassador with our Swim United campaign aims to unite different communities all over the world, to support pupils taking up swimming. I want to work on diversifying sport as a whole and eliminate these barriers to get more representation of all children in grassroots sport. I've visited many schools and seeing young boys and girls faces light up when I speak openly about my journey is something I shall never take for granted. I see the same glow in the young children's eyes online when they watch the trailer of The Little Mermaid for the first time and see a lifeline of hope, as it fills them with love, confidence in who they are, because they can finally see themselves in roles like this.

I can't express the true power in being represented on screen and in the media, as representation is a very strong catalyst of all dreams igniting. For many it will show that anything is possible. When I talk about representation, I mean representation of all kinds and sexuality is another factor that's lacked in sport.

Growing up gay, I was in denial of my sexual orientation and it was easier to pretend I was "normal" to fit in. I soon realised that "normal" is stereotyping and I should be me. It's so nice to see the younger generation is changing and more and more young people are feeling confident to be themselves. In primary school, I didn't know one "out" person, but now I have youngsters opening up to me at 12 or 13 telling me they are part of the LGBTQ+ community and it's wonderful.

These comments reminded me a lot of Netflix's Heartstopper – a TV series that educates, inspires and embraces differences onscreen. Alice Oseman is a talented author who captures a world where differences thrive and being LGBTQ+ is the new "normal". I tried football and rugby at school and very quickly found it wasn't the environment for me, but when Charlie joins the rugby team to pursue his crush on Nick, he develops this confidence in the sport that doesn't tend to be for gay boys and ignites a hope that you don't have to be a certain type of person to play sport.

> *It is so nice to see the younger generation is changing and more people are feeling confident to be themselves*

Within the series, homophobia is present, but in the way of innocence and a lack of understanding; after all, this is where it comes from and this behaviour is commonly learned. This is a series I could have only have dreamed about watching when growing up, as representation is present like nothing I've seen before in mainstream television. It makes me grieve for people who don't have the same laws in place as the UK. I represented Team GB and Team Jamaica in my professional career and challenged so many norms. I found it hard at times, but the love from my family and friends got me through. We all deserve that support network and it's made me fight harder for people in criminalising countries who don't have that privilege.

Now we have TV shows that allow us to be represented, and sport has people such as myself and Tom Daley who can help pave the way for many; life is never an easy road, but I'm a true believer that if you can see it, you can be it.

Michael Gunning competed for Great Britain and Jamaica

Djokovic defiant amid backlash over message

Tumaini Carayol
Roland Garros

Novak Djokovic has insisted that he would not hesitate to opine on Kosovo and the clashes between Kosovo authorities and ethnic Serbs again, even as the backlash to his comments continues to grow.

"I don't mind saying that. I mean, I would say it again," Djokovic said. "But I don't need to because you have my quotes if you want to reflect on that. Of course I'm aware that a lot of people would disagree, but it is what it is. It's something that I stand for."

Last night Djokovic defeated Marton Fucsovics 7-6 (2), 6-0, 6-3 to reach the third round of the French Open, where he will face Alejandro Davidovich Fokina of Spain.

Asked if he thinks he could ever experience a "drama-free" grand slam tournament, Djokovic said he did not believe it was likely. "So that's all. Drama-free grand slam, I don't think it can happen for me. I guess that drives me, as well," he said.

After his second-round match on Monday, Djokovic signed the camera "Kosovo is the heart of Serbia. Stop the violence", referencing the violent clashes that have taken place



▲ *Novak Djokovic has been told his message was 'not appropriate'*

in Northern provinces of Kosovo between Kosovo authorities and ethnic Serbs that form the majority in the north.

Amélie Oudéa-Castéra, the French sport minister, said yesterday that Djokovic's comments were "not appropriate" for an athlete. "When you carry messages about defending human rights, messages that bring people together around universal values, a sportsperson is free to express them," Oudéa-Castéra told France 2. "But in this case it was a message that is very activist, that is very political. You shouldn't get involved, especially in the current circumstances, and it shouldn't happen again."

The Kosovo Olympic Committee has requested that the International Olympic Committee open up disciplinary proceedings against Djokovic as its president accused him of promoting Serbian nationalist propaganda.

"Novak Djokovic has yet again promoted the Serbian nationalists' propaganda and used the sport platform to do so," Ismet Krasniqi, the president of Kosovo's Olympic Committee, said in a statement.

The grand slam rulebook contains no rule against players speaking about political subjects during grand slam events, meaning he will not receive any punishment from tennis authorities.

Norrie calls for video replays after cruise into third round

Briton routs Pouille before joining French player in demand for technology

Tumaini Carayol
Roland Garros

Cameron Norrie and Lucas Pouille have both called for tennis to embrace video replay technology in matches after a contentious point during Norrie's 6-1, 6-3, 6-3 second-round victory against Pouille at the French Open.

During the third set of their contest on Court Suzanne Lenglen the umpire, Eva Asderaki, failed to notice the ball had bounced twice after a sweet drop volley from Pouille, with Norrie eventually winning the point.

The British player said the ball had spun backwards and was unsure about whether it had bounced twice, until he saw the replay post-match. Pouille noted that it is the job of the umpire to call a double bounce, not the player, and they should be able to consult a video replay.

"For me the double bounce with all the cameras there is on court, it should be easy to check, and that's it. Then there is no problem," Pouille said.

Norrie agreed. "I think that would be great," he said. "There's been so many different situations over my career where there's been things happening, and I think it definitely can use it to our advantage. We have it there. We have the technology to do it. I don't know why we're not doing it in all aspects." Pouille later argued that if umpires are not penalised after making mistakes, then players should not face punishments for minor transgressions. "The umpire can make a mistake. It's human. It's normal, but if she did a mistake, I'm not sure she's going to take $15,000 for that," he said.

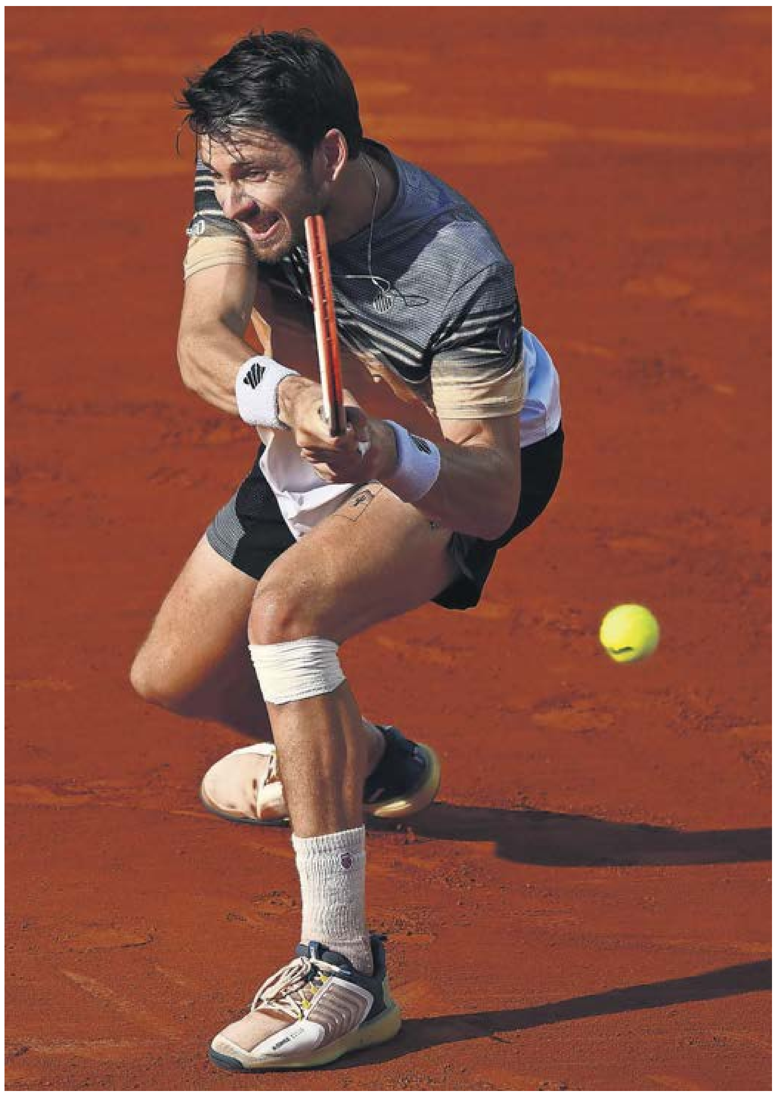
In the early days of the tournament, Pouille has produced the most noteworthy stories. A former top-10 player, the Frenchman has struggled badly with injuries and he tumbled down the rankings. In a recent interview with L'Equipe, he spoke about having depression and drinking heavily while at tournaments.

Currently ranked 675th, Pouille qualified for Roland Garros and then won his first-round match. Despite the positive vibes surrounding him, though, he could not consistently match the defence and intensity presented by Norrie, whose confidence continues to grow as he looks for his first French Open fourth round. Norrie will next face Lorenzo Musetti, the 17th seed.

"I feel good. There have been ups and downs recently, but I have a great team around me," Norrie said. "We really want to play well at the grand slams. I definitely improved my game and performance from the first round and enjoyed the match more."

Carlos Alcaraz continued to move through the French Open draw with a smile on his face even while battling difficult windy conditions. On Court Philippe-Chatrier, Alcaraz defeated Taro Daniel 6-1, 3-6, 6-1, 6-2. He will next face Denis Shapovalov, the 26th seed.

"It was really difficult, the conditions with the wind was tough," Alcaraz said. "You have to adapt your game as best as you can. I was focused on every shot, battling the wind as well. I played a great level and am really happy with my level with the wind."



▲ *Cameron Norrie plays a backhand during his straight-sets victory*
CLIVE MASON/GETTY IMAGES

Alcaraz began in supreme form, controlling almost every exchange and dominating with his forehand before he briefly lost concentration early in the second set. He instantly reestablished his dominance in the third set until the end, finishing with 47 winners to Daniel's 11.

Afterwards, Alcaraz was asked if he smiles so much because of how much he is winning or vice versa. He responded without hesitation: "I'm winning all the time because I am smiling," he said. "And I always said that smiling for me is the key of everything. I enjoy being this kind of stadium, these kind of tournament, cities. That's the most important for me to enjoy, and that's why I smile all the time."

Earlier, as Caroline Garcia made her final stand inside Court Philippe-Chatrier against Anna Blinkova, her effort was undeniable. Each time she faced a match point, the fifth seed brushed it aside to keep herself alive. In two Blinkova service games deep in the final set, Garcia saved seven match points as chants of "Caro, Caro!" pierced the air.

In the end, it did not matter. Blinkova steadied her nerves and finally served out the victory 4-6, 6-3, 7-5 on her eighth match point. With the defeat, France's greatest hope for a home French Open champion departed for another year.



▲ *Anna Blinkova celebrates beating home favourite Caroline Garcia*

London Irish get extension but survival hopes are slim

➔ Continued *from back page*

wishes of those most affected. The 4pm deadline on 6 June is final and we have added the stipulation that the club must also fulfil its contractual obligations to its employees by paying the May salaries in full."

The RFU has reiterated its demands - that the US consortium completes its proposed takeover by 6 June or that the current owner, Mick Crossan, commits to funding the club for next season - or the Exiles will be suspended from the Premiership. They are the same demands the RFU set for its original deadline - Tuesday this week - with neither met. There is no evidence and little confidence they will by 6 June.

The union's stance softened hours before the Tuesday deadline when it emerged it was willing to grant an extension on two conditions: that wages were paid in full and that the prospective buyers provided key information. Again, neither of those conditions have been met - it is understood the RFU is still waiting on documents from the buyers, as it has done for months - but an extension has been granted after consultation with staff and players.

It is understood that the likelihood of the documentation ever arriving from the prospective buyers is doubtful. Crossan can still step in and pledge to fund the club for next season but he was either unable or unwilling to before the initial deadline.

Hope was raised briefly on Tuesday when the possibility of an extension emerged and it is believed Crossan initially committed to paying the May salaries in full. At a meeting on Tuesday night, however, the players were confronted with an offer of 50% of their wages or to accept that the club would be suspended.

Against that backdrop, players are scrambling around to line up deals for next season in the event of suspension. Tom Pearson is attracting widespread interest, as is Henry Arundell. The worry is less heralded players would flood a crowded market, with agents understood to be looking for opportunities in the Premiership, the Championship and abroad.

Most clubs will have finalised their budgets for next season with little to no room under the salary cap, so the majority of players would probably move abroad or to the Championship. The glimmer of hope is that the Premiership salary cap is due to move back up to £6.4m the season after next so a cut-price deal for a year, in the Championship or abroad, before Premiership clubs have bigger budgets to play with, could be the least worst option.

The possibility of Premiership clubs being given dispensation to sign London Irish players is considered unlikely because it would require unanimous support including from those who choose not to spend up to the cap.

Sport
Football Europa League final



▼ *Ivan Rakitic and Jesús Navas hold the Europa League trophy after Sevilla's victory*
MAJA HITIJ/GETTY IMAGES

Montiel clinches magnificent seventh triumph for Sevilla

Sevilla **1**
Mancini 55og

Roma **1**
Dybala 34

aet Sevilla win 4-1 on penalties

Sid Lowe
Puskás Aréna

Sevilla's empire just will not fall, not even to the Romans. After three long, exhausting hours, the match that seemed to never end, just like their extraordinary dominance of this competition, came down to a single kick. Or so it seemed: instead, at midnight in Budapest it came down to two of them. Gonzalo Montiel, the man who scored the penalty that won his country the World Cup was entrusted with taking the penalty that would win his club their seventh, yes seventh, Europa League. This time he did not score, his shot saved by Roma's Rui Patrício.

But Anthony Taylor, the referee who had given and taken away a penalty for Sevilla during the actual game, which had lasted 147 minutes, was advised by the VAR of an encroachment. And so he gave Montiel another chance, and this time the Argentinian found the net, supporters stream down the stands and onto the pitch. At long last, it was all over. At times it had felt like this would never, ever end. But it did, and with history made once more.

Maybe it was always going to go this way when the invincible meet; certainly once this went into extra time, Paulo Dybala's opener was levelled by a Gianluca Mancini own goal, it felt like there was no way penalties could be avoided.

If this competition is Sevilla's, they had not yet come up against José Mourinho. Here they did, and it was a hell of a fight. Sevilla had played six Europa League finals and won them all; Mourinho had been in five European finals and done the same. Eleven occasions like this, without falling and by the end of this somehow they were still standing. Until that one, last astonishing roar, the final breath.

The first time this place erupted happened fast. Ivan Rakitic was nudged off the ball by Bryan Cristante, leaning head down into him, and as Sevilla paused, the Croatian waiting for the foul, Mancini stepped forward and played the pass first time towards Dybala. Suddenly in space to the left of the Sevilla centre-backs, he took one touch to control and then steered the shot past Yassine Bono.

From the touchline they came, a stampede of subs and staff heading past Mourinho and onto the pitch. He turned the other way, through the crowd pushing past, a hint of disgust on his face a calm down gesture on his hands, looking like an old man who had left his house and accidentally stumbled into a carnival on his street and now just wanted to get back inside again.

This had been presumed to be a clash of styles, José Luis Mendilibar saying: "They don't worry too much about getting to your goal that often; in that sense, they're not like us." Dybala's inclusion suggested that Roma would take a step forward a little sooner.

Wonderful footwork from him had led to the first really clear chance after just nine minutes, Leonardo Spinazzola given a clear sight of goal only to under-hit his shot. And an even better run almost gave them the opportunity for a second 10 minutes after the goal.

In a game of little fluidity and many fouls, Sevilla had done little, although the seven minutes added to the first half because of a series of head clashes, saw them start to threaten at last. Rakitic's shot hit the post, somehow avoiding the diving Patrício's back on the way out again.

If Roma had just avoided a fatal deflection that time, it was different when Jesus Navas's cross sought out Youssef En-Nesyri and Lucas Ocampos. Mancini got ahead of them but could only turn the ball into his own net. The team that got two astonishing own goals at Old Trafford had another here, the momentum seemingly theirs now: they had only been back out there eight minutes but there had already been an Ocampos attempt at an overhead kick and an opportunity for Alex Telles, who blasted over.



▲ *Roma's José Mourinho threw his medal to a lucky spectator*

As time went on, tension took over. An extraordinary scramble almost saw Roma take the lead again, Roger Ibañez, Mancini and Tammy Abraham all bundling in on a deep free-kick, the Englishman stretching to turn a shot goalwards only for Bono to save.

They would be left hearts in mouths again only at the other end when Ocampos wriggled free in the area and went down challenged by Ibañez. Taylor pointed to the spot only to be called to the VAR screen where, with Mourinho wagging a finger behind him, he watched the tackle again. Seemingly part ball, part shin, it could have gone either way; it went Roma's.

For Sevilla En-Nesyri headed over and Suso's shot was saved, before Fernando shot wide, sending these exhausted but still undefeated men, back into battle for 30 minutes more. .

Still nothing would entirely break them, still no one would crumble completely. With the clock on 130.40, the very last minute, Chris Smalling's header came back off the bar but this was their fate, they knew. And so when at last it ended, history made, it was from the spot and even that needed a little extra time and one last twist added to an astonishing tale.

Sevilla
4-2-3-1
Bono; Navas (Montiel● 95), Badé, Gudelj (Teixeira 120), Telles (Rekik 95); Rakitic●, Fernando (Jordán● 120); Ocampos●, Torres (Suso ht), Gil (Lamela● ht); En Nesyri

Roma
5-3-2
Rui Patrício; Celik● (Zalewski● 90) Mancini●, Smalling, Ibañez, Spinazzola (Llorente 105); Cristante●, Matic● (Bove 120), Pellegrini● (El Shaarawy 105); Abraham (Belotti 75), Dybala (Wijnaldum 68)

Referee Anthony Taylor (Eng)

Results

Football

UEFA EUROPA LEAGUE
Final
Sevilla (0) **1** **Roma** (1) **1**
Mancini 55og Dybala 35
(aet; Sevilla win 4-1 on pens)

Cricket

VITALITY T20 BLAST

North Group: Northampton Warwickshire 202-6 (RM Yates 71). Northamptonshire 181-7 (RS Vasconcelos 65; CN Miles 4-29). Warwickshire win by 21 runs.

South Group: Northwood Glamorgan 238-3 (CB Cooke 113no, CA Ingram 92no). Middlesex 209-5 (JB Cracknell 77, SS Eskinazi 59). Glamorgan win by 29 runs.

Rose Bowl Hampshire 156-4 (JM Vince 88no). Surrey 157-4 (WG Jacks 83no). Surrey win by six wickets.

CHARLOTTE EDWARDS CUP

Group stage: Northampton Sunrisers 149-6. Storm 150-3 (DR Gibson 62, FC Wilson 58no). Storm win by seven wickets.

Rose Bowl Thunder 111. Vipers 115-6 (EM McCaughan 42). Vipers win by four wickets.

Tennis

FRENCH OPEN (Roland Garros)

Men: Singles: Second round: C ALCARAZ (Sp, 1) bt T Daniel (Jpn) 6-1 3-6 6-1 6-2; **S Ofner** (Aut) bt S KORDA (US, 24) 6-3 7-6 (1) 6-4; **F Fognini** (It) bt J Kubler (Aus) 6-4 7-6 (5) 6-2; **K KHACHANOV** (Rus, 11) bt R Albot (Mol) 6-3 6-4 6-2; **L Sonego** (It) bt U Humbert (Fr) 6-4 6-3 7-6 (3); **S TSITSIPAS** (Gre, 5) bt R Carballés Baena (Sp) 6-3 7-6 (4) 6-2; **D SHAPOVALOV** (Can, 26) bt M Arnaldi (It) 6-2 3-6 6-3 6-3; **D Schwartzman** (Arg) bt N Borges (Por) 7-6 (3) 6-4 6-3; **C NORRIE** (GB, 14) bt L Pouille (Fr) 6-1 6-3 6-3; **A DAVIDOVICH FOKINA** (Sp, 29) bt L van Assche (Fr) 6-4 6-3 7-6 (6); **J Pablo Varillas** (Per) bt R BAUTISTA AGUT (Sp, 19) 1-6 4-6 6-3 6-1 6-1; **T Kokkinakis** (Aus) bt S Wawrinka (Swi) 3-6 7-5 6-3 6-7 (4) 6-3; **H HURKACZ** (Pol, 13) bt T Griekspoor (Neth) 6-3 5-7 6-7 (13) 7-6 (5) 6-4; **A RUBLEV** (Rus, 7) bt C Moutet (Fr) 6-4 6-2 3-6 6-3; **L MUSETTI** (It, 17) bt A Shevchenko (Rus) 6-1 6-1 6-2; **N DJOKOVIC** (Ser, 3) bt M Fucsovics (Hun) 7-6 (2) 6-0 6-3
Doubles: First round: K KRAWIETZ & T PUETZ (Ger, 11) bt V Vlad Cornea & Zhang Z (Rom/Chn) 7-5 6-4; **I DODIG & A KRAJICEK** (Cro/US, 4) bt S Baez & G Duran (Arg) 7-6 (3) 3-6 7-6 (4); **I Ivashka & A Popyrin** (Blr/Aus) bt N Sriram Balaji & J Nedunchezhiyan (Ind) 6-3 6-4; **T Arribage & L Sanchez** (Fr) bt A Fils & G Mpetshi Perricard (Fr) 6-3 3-6 6-4; **MA Hüsler & N Jarry** (Swi/Chi) bt M Demoliner & A Vavassori (Bra/It) 6-3 6-7 (4) 6-3; **M Melo & J Peers** (Bra/Aus) bt W Blumberg & M Kecmanovic (US/Ser) 5-7 6-3 6-4; **S Doumbia & F Reboul** (Fr) bt R BOPANNA & M EBDEN (Ind/Aus, 6) 7-5 7-6 (5); **M Giron & M McDonald** (US) bt PH Herbert & N Mahut (Fr) 5-7 6-3 7-6 (6); **Y Bhambri & S Myneni** (Ind) bt E Couacaud & A Rinderknech (Fr) 6-3 6-2; **M Purcell & B Shelton** (Aus/US) bt J Cash & H Patten (GB) 3-6 6-3 6-4; **J Eysseric & H Mayot** (Fr) bt C Eubanks & JP Smith (US/Aus) 7-6 (1) 6-0; **R RAM & J SALISBURY** (US/GB, 2) bt H Dellien & G Pella (Bol/Arg) 2-6 6-1 6-4

Women: Singles: Second round: P Stearns (US) bt J OSTAPENKO (Lat, 17) 6-3 1-6 6-2; **A Blinkova** (Rus) bt C GARCIA (Fr, 5) 4-6 6-3 7-5; **A SABALENKA** (Blr, 2) bt I Shymanovich (Blr) 7-5 6-2; **A POTAPOVA** (Rus, 24) bt M Sherif (Egy) 3-6 6-4 6-1; **E Svitolina** (Ukr) bt S Hunter (Aus) 2-6 6-3 6-1; **J PEGULA** (US, 3) bt C Giorgi (It) 6-2 ret; **S Stephens** (US) bt V Gracheva (Rus) 6-2 6-1; **Y Putintseva** (Kaz) bt ZHENG Q (Chn, 19) 6-3 4-6 6-2; **K Muchova** (Cz) bt N Podoroska (Arg) 6-3 0-6 6-3; **A Pavlyuchenkova** (Rus) bt L SAMSONOVA (Rus, 15) 4-6 7-5 7-5; **IC BEGU** (Rom, 27) bt S Errani (It) 6-3 6-0; **E MERTENS** (Bel, 28) bt a Osorio (Col) 6-3 7-6 (3); **D KASATKINA** (Rus, 9) bt M Vondrousova (Cz) 6-3 6-4; **C Tauson** (Den) bt L Fernandez (Can) 6-3 5-7 6-4; **K Rakhimova** (Rus) bt M Frech (Pol) 6-3 6-4; **E Avanesyan** (Rus) bt L Jeanjean (Fr) 6-0 7-5
Doubles: First round: M Bouzkova & S Sorribes Tormo (Cz/Sp) bt S Chang & A Kulikov (US) 3-6 6-4 6-2; **C GAUFF & J PEGULA** (US, 2) bt L Siegemund & V Zvonareva (Ger/Rus) 6-2 6-2; **A Cornet & D Parry** (Fr) bt E Lechemia & J Ponchet (Fr) 6-4 6-7 (6) 6-3; **A MUHAMMAD & G OLMOS** (US/Mex, 12) bt A Bogdan & B Pera (Rom/US) 7-6 (4) 6-4; **V Azarenka & B Haddad Maia** (Blr/Bra) bt K Kanepi & T Mihalikova (Est/Svk) 6-0 6-1; **U Eikeri & E Hozumi** (Nor/Jpn) bt B KREJCIKOVA & K SINIAKOVA (Cz, 1) 3-6 6-2 6-2; **I Neel & Wu F-h** (Est/Tai) bt AL Friedsam & N Kichenok (Ger/Ukr) 6-7 (2) 6-4 6-3; **D KRAWCZYK & D SCHUURS** (US/Neth, 5) bt C Bucsa & A Rosolska (Sp/Pol) 6-0 6-2; **J Paolini & M Trevisan** (It) bt A Barnett & O Nicholls (GB) 7-6 (5) 1-6 6-4; **N MELICHAR & E PEREZ** (US/Aus, 6) bt C Burel & C Paquet (Fr) 6-2 6-2; **I Khromacheva & L Noskova** (Rus/Cz) bt A Panova & Y Sizikova (Rus) 6-4 6-4; **D Galfi & K Piter** (Hun/Pol) bt A Guarachi & E Routliffe (Chl/NZ) 6-2 5-7 6-2; **Y Bonaventure & P Udvardy** (Bel/Hun) bt A Robbe & A Tubello (Fr) 7-6 (5) 6-3; **M Zanevska & K Zimmermann** (Bel) bt T Andrianjafitrimo & F Ferro (Fr) 6-3 6-1; **CHAN L & CHAN H-C** (Tai, 14) bt A Bolsova & O Kalashnikova (Sp/Geo) 6-7 (5) 7-6 (5) 6-4; **K Flipkens & S Rogers** (Bel/US) bt N Parrizas-Diaz & S Santamaria (Sp/US) 6-1 6-1; **G DABROWSKI & L STEFANI** (Can/Bra, 8) bt E Cocciaretto & T Maria (It/Ger) 6-2 6-2

Fixtures

Football
cinch Scottish Premiership playoffs
Final: First leg Partick Thistle v Ross County (8pm)
Cricket (7pm unless stated)
Only Test (first day of four) England v Ireland, Lord's (11am)
Vitality T20 Blast **North Group** Leicestershire v Derbyshire, Grace Road (6.30pm); Yorkshire v Lancashire, Headingley
South Group Sussex v Essex, Hove

Greg Wood's racing tips

Yarmouth **2.00** Arlo's Sunshine **2.30** Marroof **3.00** Twilight Guest **3.30** Ghara **4.00** Lady Eros **4.30** Cancan In The Rain **5.00** Crack Regimente
Lingfield **2.12** Struck Gold **2.42** Garner **3.12** Victors Dream **3.42** Proud Fairy **4.12** Crazy Maisie **4.42** Mr Freedom **5.12** Cherry Colae
Ripon **2.20** Tokyo Drift **2.50** Sidney's Son **3.20** Fulfilled **3.50** Gastronomy **4.20** Pisanello (nb) **4.50** Another Baar **5.22** Hurstwood (nap)
Market Rasen **5.40** Woodie Flash **6.10** Carrarea **6.40** Double Click **7.10** Tardree **7.45** Friary Rock **8.15** Coup De Pinceau **8.45** Hot Fizzy Lizzy
Carlisle **5.50** Mauna Loa **6.20** Charged Up **6.50** Ribkana **7.25** Flying Frontier **7.55** Detective **8.30** B Associates **9.00** Annandale

Leaving Houghton out of World Cup squad could prove a major mistake

Analysis
Experienced former captain appeared ideal replacement for injured Leah Williamson

Louise Taylor

Sarina Wiegman's decision to omit Steph Houghton from England's World Cup squad has prompted little surprise but an awful lot of dissension. It is the sort of contentious, high-stakes selection call that sometimes ends up coming back to bite managers on the backside. Wiegman's closest allies will interpret it as another piece of characteristic sound judgment on the part of a coach who simply does not do sentiment.

In the interim, England fans will fret that the woman who led the Lionesses to Euro 2022 glory at Wembley last summer, and before that won Euro 2017 with her native Netherlands, has made her first major mistake.

Houghton's sidelining at a moment when the case for the former captain's recall has rarely looked more compelling seems peculiarly self-destructive. At 35, the 121-cap Manchester City centre-half's international career had appeared over but then Leah Williamson, her replacement as captain and in central defence, ruptured an anterior cruciate ligament and was ruled out of the tournament this summer in Australia and New Zealand.

Given that Houghton had recovered from the achilles rupture which sidelined her for a year to excel for Manchester City this season she seemed a natural replacement. Throw in her stellar club central defensive partnership with England's Alex Greenwood and the invaluable, mud-on-boots, experience of having represented the Lionesses in four major tournaments, and three semi-finals, and the words "no brainer" came to mind.

City's manager, Gareth Taylor, recently said: "Steph's playing some of her best ever football. Her leadership qualities are huge; she's professionalism personified."

The argument for putting her on the plane to Australia only strengthened when Chelsea's Millie Bright, another centre-half and a key reason why England won Euro 2022, underwent a cartilage operation in March. Bright, who will captain the Lionesses, has not kicked a ball since but Wiegman remains confident she will be fit for England's opening game against Haiti in Brisbane on 22 July.

England's coach is probably right but it still represents a risk, making the lack of an insurance policy in the shape of Houghton even more puzzling. Is Arsenal's Lotte Wubben-Moy, capped 10 times, really a better defender? Is Manchester United's admittedly promising 21-year-old, twice-capped Maya Le Tissier definitely a more suitable standby player?

And, equally importantly, is there not a lack of experience in a youthful squad featuring only six players - Bright, Lucy Bronze, Jordan Nobbs, Keira Walsh, Georgia Stanway and Rachel Daly - who have previously played at a World Cup?

Perhaps it comes down to a lack of communication. Wiegman's predecessor, Phil Neville, cannot speak highly enough of Houghton but he has admitted that, initially, he struggled to connect properly with her and truly "bonded" only after the pair met for a very long chat over coffee in Manchester. It was then that Houghton told him her husband, Stephen Darby, the former Liverpool defender, had motor neurone disease.

"What Steph's going through is horrific but you'd never know," said Neville. "She's got courage and class. She's a brilliant player but an even better person."

Maybe there was no repairing the damage done by the harsh words Wiegman and Houghton exchanged when the latter failed to make the cut for England's Euro 2022 squad but it still seems an awful shame that many people's WSL player of the season will not be pulling on a Lionesses

Steph Houghton's sidelining at this moment seems peculiarly self-destructive



Three lions on their shirt The squad in full

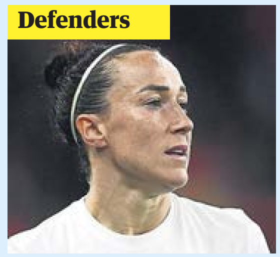
Goalkeepers


Mary Earps 30 Caps 33
Manchester United


Ellie Roebuck 23 Caps 11
Manchester United


Hannah Hampton 22 Caps 2
Aston Villa

Defenders


Lucy Bronze 31 Caps 104
Barcelona


Alex Greenwood 29 Caps 74
Manchester City


Millie Bright 29 Caps 66
Chelsea

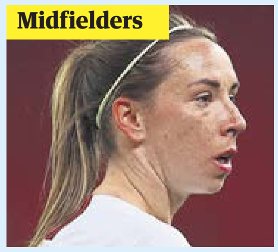

Jess Carter 25 Caps 17
Chelsea


Lotte Wubben-Moy 24 Caps 10
Arsenal


Niamh Charles 23 Caps 6
Chelsea


Esme Morgan 22 Caps 4
Manchester City

Midfielders

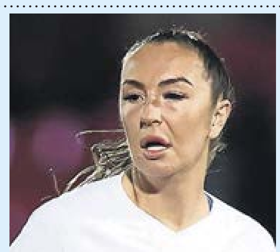

Jordan Nobbs 30 Caps 71
Aston Villa


Keira Walsh 26 Caps 58
Barcelona


Georgia Stanway 24 Caps 49
Bayern Munich


Ella Toone 23 Caps 31
Manchester United


Laura Coombs 32 Caps 4
Manchester City


Katie Zelem 27 Caps 7
Manchester United

Forwards


Rachel Daly 31 Caps 68
Aston Villa


Lauren Hemp 22 Caps 37
Manchester City


Chloe Kelly 25 Caps 25
Manchester City


Bethany England 28 Caps 21
Tottenham


Alessia Russo 24 Caps 21
Manchester United


Lauren James 21 Caps 10
Chelsea


Katie Robinson 20 Caps 4
Brighton

shirt again in July. Ditto another of England's injured contingent Fran Kirby. Chelsea's attacking playmaker is one of a handful of world-class current Lionesses and her ability to play between the lines will be missed terribly.

If Kirby joined the attacking dots, Jill Scott regularly impressed in England's midfield while using what Wiegman's terms her "social intelligence" and humour to maintain off-field morale during long weeks away from home on the international road. Scott, though, retired after Euro 2022, as did Ellen White, the Lionesses' record goalscorer, who gave birth to a daughter in April.

Although even the best defences will not relish facing England's central striking contingent – Alessia Russo, Rachel Daly and Bethany England – White's intelligent movement and extraordinary ability to hold the ball up, exhaust markers and create openings for others was often underestimated.

During Euro 2022, White's presence helped the outstanding Beth Mead, win the golden boot. Sadly, the Arsenal winger, who contributed six goal and five assists in six matches last summer, has lost her race against time to recover from her own ACL rupture. The challenge is for Lauren Hemp, Chloe Kelly and others to prove that Mead is not quite indispensable after all.

At least Lucy Bronze has recovered from her sixth knee operation to resume at right-back and her imperious Barcelona teammate Keira Walsh is still around to control central midfield.

England will surely need Bronze and Walsh at their very best. After a – theoretically – straightforward group they look on course to face Canada, the Olympic champions, or Australia, who in April inflicted the first defeat of Wiegman's 31-match reign, potentially followed by a quarter-final against Germany and a possible semi-final with France.

Lifting the trophy without Mead, Kirby and Williamson looks a tall order and the fear is that, in overlooking Houghton, Wiegman has made it that bit harder.

Tournament details

World Cup 2023
20 July-20 August

Format
32 teams competing in eight groups of four at 10 venues in Australia and New Zealand.

England's schedule
Group D
22 July **Haiti**
Lang Park, Brisbane
28 July **Denmark**
Sydney Football Stadium
1 Aug **China**
Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide

The final
20 August
Stadium Australia, Sydney

Wiegman in wrangle over release of England players

Continued *from back page*

out. Le Tissier's Manchester United teammate Nikita Parris has also not made the cut but their clubmate Katie Zelem is in. In the 23-player squad only Barcelona's Lucy Bronze and Brighton's Katie Robinson are with clubs which are not ECA members. Germany also confirmed their squad yesterday and Martina Voss-Tecklenburg, their manager, said Bayern Munich – where England's Georgia Stanway plays – would not release anyone before 23 June.

The ECA struck its deal after raising concerns players were being called up too early and put at risk. The mandatory Fifa release date is 10 July but that was widely acknowledged as too late, particularly for a tournament in Australia and New Zealand. "I still hope we can negotiate," Wiegman said. "At this point it's hard but what we're trying."

The World Cup final is on 20 August and the WSL begins again on 29 September. Before that, though, Arsenal face a Champions League qualifier on 6 September and there is an international window from 18-26 September.

"After the tournament sometimes it's hard to get the rest because competitive games start again," Wiegman said. "So that's why we have to collaborate and talk to each other to try to solve that."

She believes more than two weeks' rest before the World Cup would not be "good preparation", and England players are due to work on individual programmes from 12 June. Wiegman wants the squad to prepare at St George's Park from 19 June and fly to Australia on 5 July.

"We're going to the other side of the world – that takes a couple of days too," she said. "It's two days for travelling; you can't start training straight away because you first have to do the jet lag. So we really need that time to get prepared. I just hope that we keep going with the good conversations and we resolve this."

Wiegman said Bright would captain the team. The manager said the centre-back was "still building" fitness but sounded optimistic. "We need to build a little more but it looks good." She indicated Mary Earps was next in line for the captaincy.

Wiegman said she had ruled out Mead a long time back. "She's so positive and going well but with the timescale she had we would have taken so many risks to get to the World Cup and she had a personal situation too," she said. "I'm not willing to take that risk to push her too much and she gets injured again."

England's call-up is her first since September, when she scored in the 10-0 defeat of Luxembourg. The forward signed for Spurs from Chelsea in January in search of first-team football to improve her World Cup chances and was vital to the team avoiding relegation. Wiegman praised England's form and "resilience".

Jordan Nobbs has made the cut in midfield, despite picking up an injury in Aston Villa's penultimate game. She missed Euro 2017 and the 2019 World Cup through injury. Le Tissier, the forward Jess Park and the goalkeeper Emily Ramsey are on standby. Wiegman said it was a "hard call" not to select Le Tissier, but that she regarded the 21-year-old more as a right-back than a centre-half, where she has been used by United.

On the diversity of the squad, with 21 of the players white, Wiegman said: "I understand that people look at it like that and I hope that will change, but that won't change overnight." She pointed to work being done by the FA and to greater access to football for girls in school. "In the future we have more players from different backgrounds in the national team."

Sixteen of the World Cup squad were also at Euro 2022, but Niamh Charles, Laura Coombs, Lauren James, Esme Morgan, Robinson and Zelem will be at their first major tournament.

> *'It's two days for travelling; you can't start training straight away because first you have the jet lag'*
>
> **Sarina Wiegman**
> *England manager*



▲ *Sarina Wiegman talks to schoolchildren at the squad announcement*
NATHAN STIRK/GETTY IMAGES

Premier League

Mount agrees terms with United as Chelsea exodus gathers pace

Jacob Steinberg
Fabrizio Romano

Manchester United have reached an agreement on personal terms with Mason Mount and are expected to win the race to sign the Chelsea midfielder this summer.

Chelsea are set for a clearout and have also given permission for Manchester City to open talks with Mateo Kovacic. Pep Guardiola is looking for more depth in central midfield and Kovacic, who has a year left on his deal, is expected to join the Premier League champions.

United have not agreed a fee for Mount and Chelsea are expected to demand at least £60m for the 24-year-old. Erik ten Hag, United's manager, wants more dynamism in midfield and he admires Mount's athleticism, pressing and versatility.

Liverpool have rejected a bid from RB Leipzig for Fábio Carvalho. Their preference would be to find a loan for the 20-year-old but they could be open to a permanent deal that included a buy-back clause.

Carvalho, who can play in midfield or as a winger, made eight starts this season after joining from Fulham. He was involved in 10 of the first 11 league matches but played only 11 minutes in the league after that and Jürgen Klopp opened the door to a loan last Friday.

Liverpool are continuing to push to conclude a deal for Brighton's Alexis Mac Allister and have the Borussia Mönchengladbach midfielder Manu Koné on their list of targets.

Brentford have completed the signing of the goalkeeper Mark Flekken from Freiburg after activating the €13m (£11.2m) release clause. David Raya hopes the deal will clear the way for his departure but his representatives want the £40m asking price to be lowered. **Crystal Palace** are close to signing Jefferson Lerma, who is leaving **Bournemouth**. **Aston Villa** have confirmed the departure of Ashley Young.



▲ *Mason Mount is set to move to Manchester United in the summer*

Fans who use wheelchairs being failed, says charity

Paul MacInnes

The Premier League has been accused of failing to live up to a promise to guarantee match access to wheelchair-using fans. The charity Level Playing Field, which campaigns for the rights of disabled sports fans, says the number of Premier League clubs providing suitable wheelchair user spaces has fallen over the past five years, despite a pledge in 2015 that all clubs would meet a nationally recognised standard.

Seven top-flight clubs, more than a third of the league, are understood not to reach the benchmark, which was determined by the Accessible Stadia Guide, a good-practice guide for the design of sport facilities to meet the needs of disabled spectators.

The figures come on the fifth anniversary of a report by the Equality and Human Rights Commission which observed work undertaken by top-flight clubs to make stadiums more accessible. The EHRC found 17 of the 20 clubs in 2018 had reached the ASG criteria. Of the 14 remaining clubs from that period, two do not reach that benchmark, according to Level Playing Field. Five of the six clubs promoted since also fail.

In 2015, following campaigning by Level Playing Field, Premier League clubs committed to complying with ASG recommendations by 2017. The target was missed, but improvement was acknowledged by the EHCR.

"The reports which followed the pledge from Premier League clubs showed an immediate impact from that commitment," the chair of Level Playing Field, Tony Taylor, said.

"It is deeply concerning to see this momentum has not carried across to many of the clubs promoted since then. Clubs must be mandated to reach a required set of standards for accessibility, or in many cases it will not be a priority. The Premier League has the potential to be the undisputed global leader on accessibility in sport. Five years on from the culmination of this groundbreaking project, we hope they take up that opportunity."

Possible solutions to the question of oversight could be to introduce the ASG recommendations into the Premier League rulebook. Or, alternatively, that the mandate for insisting upon the benchmark could fall under the brief of a new Independent Regulator for English Football.

A Premier League spokesperson said: "All Premier League clubs are committed to meeting the Accessible Stadia Guidelines and have undertaken substantial work to improve disabled access for home and visiting fans. This is a priority for the League."



▲ *The England squad warm up for their final pre-Test training session at Lord's yesterday*
RAY LAWRENCE/ SHUTTERSTOCK

McCullum's Test addicts ready for their first fix of a special summer

With Ashes looming large, a two-month banquet of red ball cricket kicks off with visit of Ireland to Lord's today

Ali Martin
Lord's

When Stuart Broad said recently that he was addicted to playing for this England team under the uber-positive leadership of Ben Stokes and Brendon McCullum, it wasn't hard to see where the old warhorse was coming from.

It's now 92 days since that epic one-run defeat against New Zealand in windy Wellington, concluding a year of dramatic transmogrification for England during which their previous run of one win from 17 Tests was replaced by 10 from their past 12.

The withdrawal symptoms for those of us looking on have grown considerably during the hiatus and the sense, from watching training and seeing the smiles on faces, is that the players have felt the same.

These cravings will finally be sated this week, Ireland over for a four-day Test that gets under way at Lord's today. Andy Balbirnie's tourists might be heavy underdogs, their opportunities to play the longest format limited and their nascent first-class system mothballed since the pandemic, but they won't forget rolling England for 85 all out on the first morning here four years ago.

It also marks the start of what promises to be a pretty special summer of Test cricket. After three months of abstinence a veritable two-month banquet awaits us, before the table is swiftly cleared for the Hundred to take centre stage in August.

A World Test Championship final between Australia and India at the Oval, five men's Ashes Tests, plus a rare five-day women's Test thrown in the mix? To hell with slow and steady: undo the top button, slip into some comfortable elastic-waisted slacks and get ready to gorge on the good stuff.

Stokes was dressed accordingly a day out from the toss, even if England's snazzy new tracksuits are fashionably tight around the calves. He looked in pretty rude health too, energised and tanned after his recent time at - if hardly playing in - the Indian Premier League. That said, he once again opted against bowling during a final session on the Nursery Ground that was played out to the upbeat house tunes of McCullum's massive Bluetooth speaker.

It's here where questions linger - Stokes's chronic knee problem that is, not McCullum's penchant for a spot of Martin Solveig. Since hobbling off the outfield at the Basin Reserve in February, Stokes has played two IPL matches, bowled one over for 18 runs, and thus offered little tangible evidence of improvement. He insisted he is "in a much better place" after a lot of hard work behind the scenes, claimed to be in a similar state to the 2019 summer, and said the added adrenaline of a Test should not be forgotten here.



Brendon McCullum's team will continue their ultra-attacking approach

Whether this translates to a return of the full-blown champion all-rounder remains to be seen, Stokes conceding that mind and body may not agree here. This issue aside, there are a few changes since England last donned the whites. Jimmy Anderson and Ollie Robinson are rested amid niggles - the kind that didn't seem worth risking against Ireland, said Stokes - while Ben Foakes has made way for the fit-again Jonny Bairstow, despite doing little wrong.

Josh Tongue also makes his debut in an attack led by Broad and Matthew Potts, Stokes explaining this was a case of wanting to take a look at a young thruster before - not during - the Ashes and Chris Woakes, the leapfrogged party, a known quantity.

It makes sense in some ways, even if less accommodating characters than Woakes might have kicked off at this reshuffling of the pecking order. Tongue is coming back from a side strain, however, and it also means no swing bowler for England at Lord's, which is slightly curious in itself.

One thing that hasn't changed is the messaging, with Stokes insisting his side would not divert from the approach that has seen them rattle along at 4.7 per over with the bat, treat the notion of a draw with contempt, and look to put enjoyment and entertainment at the forefront of everything they do. To switch now, just because the Ashes will soon be on the line, would be to forget what turned the ship around in the first place.

"This Ashes isn't the thing that's going to define us," Stokes said. "That's probably a bit strong, but what I mean by that is this Ashes series is just part of the journey that we've been on and will continue to be on after this series. If you look at it too deeply as the be-all and end-all, when the Ashes series is finished, win or lose, it'll be like: 'What do we do from here?' The best thing about this team is that we don't know the destination. Putting too much onus on this [Ashes] series compared to the others we've played would - not derail us - but would just not be what we've done over the past year."

Such a long-term outlook is a luxury that a team like Ireland don't have, this just their seventh Test since becoming a full-member nation in 2017. And more generally, looking at the future tours programme, the longest format is starting to shrink for others, as ICC revenues are funnelled to the big boys and T20 leagues spread across the landscape like the red weed imagined by HG Wells.

But for this summer in England at least, there is little doubt that the main course starts at Lord's today, runs until 31 July and is called Test cricket. If it lives up to expectations, a good few more addicts should be created along the way.

Match details

England
Confirmed
Zak Crawley, Ben Duckett, Ollie Pope, Joe Root, Harry Brook, Ben Stokes (capt), Jonny Bairstow (wkt), Stuart Broad, Matthew Potts, Jack Leach, Josh Tongue
Venue Lord's
Start 11am
TV Sky Sports Cricket

Ireland
Possible
James McCollum, PJ Moor, Andy Balbirnie (capt), Harry Tector, Paul Stirling, Lorcan Tucker (wkt), Curtis Campher, Andy McBrine, Mark Adair, Graham Hume, Craig Young
Umpires A Holdstock (SA) and P Wilson (Aus)
TV umpire K Dharmasena (SL) **Referee** R Richardson (WI)

Weather	Today	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	Sunny intervals Max 20C	Moderate breeze Max 20C	Gentle breeze Max 21C	Moderate breeze Max 21C

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▼ *Josh Tongue is set to make his England debut today*
ZAC GOODWIN/PA



Injury hope
Stokes says layoff may be blessing in disguise

Simon Burnton
Lord's

Ben Stokes will hope to power himself through a hectic two months of Test cricket with the aid of adrenaline and cortisone, with England's captain having to manage his body as much as his squad as he goes into the curtain-raiser against Ireland starting today.

Stokes had a cortisone injection into his troublesome left knee in March before he joined Chennai Super Kings for their Indian Premier League campaign, and he said yesterday that while "I don't plan ahead too much" the treatment would be repeated "if needs be".

However, the 31-year-old England captain says he has "got into a place where I feel like I am back at 2019, 2020 in terms of my own body and fitness". He has been helped by the fact that playing only two matches in India allowed him to concentrate on preparing himself for the summer.

"What I have done is given myself the best opportunity to play a full role with the ball this summer," he said. "I would much rather have been playing but I was able to turn a disappointing situation into a positive one because I was able to concentrate on properly being able to train. Sitting here today I'm actually thinking it could have been a blessing in disguise."

While he had a lengthy bat in the nets yesterday and has no concerns about his ability to build a Test innings, Stokes has not bowled all week and for all his pre-match positivity may attempt to avoid doing so once the action begins at Lord's.

> *'I feel like I am back at 2019, 2020 in terms of my own body and fitness'*
>
> **Ben Stokes**
> *England captain*

"I've made a promise to myself and teammates, in particular the bowlers, that I will be doing everything I possibly can to be in a position to fulfil that role," Stokes said. "The great thing that sport and being out in the arena gives you is adrenaline. It gives you stuff you're able to do in a game that you probably would not be able to do [in] training."

But the decision not to select Jimmy Anderson, Ollie Robinson or Mark Wood for this game illustrates England's approach to the Ireland Test at Lord's. "It would be a completely different team if this was Australia tomorrow. I don't think I'm wrong in saying that. We had to look at risk versus reward and I didn't feel this game was worth taking the risk."

If England have taken no risks, however, neither have they relied on safe bets. Chris Woakes, particularly given his fabulous record at Lord's, would have been one of those but England will instead to give a debut to Josh Tongue. "Everyone knows what Chris offers to a team, so we saw this as a chance to give Tongue an opportunity," Stokes said. "It was a great opportunity we couldn't look past."

Tongue's ascent from sickbed to Test team has been meteoric - after 14 months out of the game with a shoulder complaint he came back last August, made his England Lions debut in January and will walk out at Lord's, for the first time in any competition, in June - but Stokes revealed he has been monitored for some time.

"He's someone who has been spoken about ever since he first played for Worcestershire," Stokes said. "He is someone who possesses a bit more pace than most of the guys who have been spoken about as the next guys in line. Someone who is able to bowl with that extra pace and come on and change the way the game is going is always great to have in your side."

But even Tongue is more experienced than many members of the squad preparing to play only the seventh Test in Ireland's history. It contains eight players who have played fewer than 20 first-class games and its youngest member, the 22-year-old Tom Mayes, made his first-class debut last week.

"Whatever team we pick there's not going to be a lot of first-class experience," said Andrew Balbirnie, their captain. "There are players in our group who have the skill, there's no doubt about that, but it's a different skill in the longer format of the game. In [white-ball cricket] you just have to have a good 10-15 overs and you can come out on the right end of the result. A Test match is completely different and that's going to be the biggest challenge."

'We skittled England for 85 last time ... we can take on big boys'

Wicketkeeper Lorcan Tucker wants Ireland to play more Tests so they will not be 'still learning on the job'

Simon Burnton

This has already been a big year for Irish Test cricket: having qualified to compete in the format by becoming full members of the International Cricket Council in June 2017 they played five Tests in the following five-and-a-half years, but today at Lord's they will play their fourth since the start of April.

Their game against Bangladesh that month started 1,348 days after the end of their previous Test, also at Lord's (in that time England played 49 Tests, India 36 and Australia 33). Before this year no Irishman had scored a Test century since Kevin O'Brien in 2018, but Lorcan Tucker broke the run in Mirpur - where Andy McBrine also posted the country's best bowling figures of six for 118 - and Curtis Campher and Paul Stirling followed him in Sri Lanka a few weeks later.

They are yet to win a game, but they are looking more at home. Still, this is unfamiliar territory. At 26, Tucker, Ireland's wicketkeeper-batter, has played 18 first-class games, most of them in Ireland's inter-provincial championship and, including the warm-up against Essex last week, only five since 2019.

"Sometimes it feels more natural than others," he says of building a first-class innings. "You're kind of plodding along, trying to figure it out as you go. In Sri Lanka we fielded three days in a row - I don't think it'll get much harder than that, in 40C heat - and with wicketkeeping high concentration is required every ball and that is definitely a challenge.

"But when I was a kid we always used to watch Test cricket. It's great now to be able to play and have that experience and it's pretty special to be a part of history - white-ball cricket is new and fresh and exciting, but it doesn't have that long history Test cricket has. Just to be a part of that is amazing."

Tucker got a reminder of his place in cricketing history at Lord's last summer. He was in Ireland's squad when they played there in 2019, but, as a playing member of the MCC, was present when England played South Africa last August.

"I remember standing in the Long Room, looking out the window watching the lads go out," he says of the 2019 game. "It'll be the other way around now - it'll be me walking down through the Long Room and going down those steps. It'll be pretty nice to do it as an MCC member and then when I return in years to come to watch I'll know I've done it myself. It's a proud thing for me and my family."

Tucker scored his century against Bangladesh after coming in at 51 for five, with his team 155 behind after the first innings and scrapping to stay in the contest (they ended up losing by seven wickets).

"One of the main things we try to do is break down the day into little mini-sessions," he says. "The good thing about Test cricket is there will always be a break coming at some stage: drinks, lunch, tea, stumps. If you can take the little mini-sessions they add up eventually. It would have been nice to make a bit more of that, but that's the nature of it - we're learning on the job and looking to improve each time."

England are using the Ireland Test as preparation for the Ashes and Tucker has already helped them overcome Australia once. When the second qualifying spot in Group 1 of last year's T20 World Cup became a battle to see which side could accumulate the best net run rate, it was his unbeaten 71 that helped to restrict Australia's to a beatable level and ease England's passage to eventual victory (he received not a single message of thanks).

> *'Walking through the Long Room to play England will be a proud moment for my family'*



◀ *Lorcan Tucker made a Test century, Ireland's first since 2018, in April against Bangladesh, coming in with his side 51 for five*
ECB/GETTY IMAGES

But as in 2019, when they bowled England out before lunch on the first day, and in last year's World Cup, when they won a rain-affected game in Melbourne, Ireland will be trying to make themselves a nuisance.

"Looking back on the 2019 Test, it was great to make an impression," Tucker says. "I know everybody thinks we don't play much Test cricket so it should be an easy walkover, but for us it's about trying to make a statement. Last time we bowled them out for 85 - I don't know if that's going to repeat itself but it's the same mindset. We have to show we can put in good performances with the ball and bat, and that's what earns you respect in international cricket.

"I know results haven't gone our way but it's not all that, there are smaller things I think people recognise and we're trying to just build that. Hopefully, some day we can create a proper Test team that plays more consistently."

Tucker is more comfortable with white-ball cricket, more familiar with its rhythms, but if Tests are still strange and draining, news they are not fashionable has yet to reach him. "There's a lot of focus on T20 and franchise cricket and the money that it generates, but at the end of the day cricket is a game, not a revenue stream," he says.

"That mindset, that cricket is a game, you have to hold that as the most important thing, and then Test cricket will show it has an important place. A lot of our lads know that, even though they've come from a white-ball background, it's something we want to treasure.

"Australia, England and India play a lot of Test cricket between themselves but there's got to be more to Test cricket than just those big teams - and we want to be a part of that."

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Sport

Roma pay penalty
Cup final kings Sevilla claim Europa League glory after nail-biting shootout



Match report *Page 33* →

Stokes allays fitness fears
‘I'm ready to play full role with ball this summer’ says captain

Lord's Test preview
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JOHN WALTON/PA

London Irish get extension but survival hopes slim

Gerard Meagher

London Irish have been granted a final stay of execution by the Rugby Football Union at the explicit request of the club's players and staff but the Exiles' chances of long-term survival are considered slim.

Irish have until 6 June to pay the outstanding 50% of the wages of players and staff as well as meet the RFU's initial demands if they are to avoid suspension from the Premiership. The prospect of the takeover being completed is considered a long shot by insiders, however, and it is understood the extension has been granted primarily in the hope that club employees will at least receive their salaries.

Suspension would represent a bleak outcome for Irish, who would join Wasps and Worcester in being ejected from the Premiership in the space of eight months. It would also accelerate plans for a 10-team Premiership, which would be introduced from next season, but mean the league has lost 23% of its clubs since October.

London Irish players and staff received 50% of their May wages yesterday - the second month running that they have not been paid in full and on time. The RFU has expressed its “extreme disappointment” with that outcome but stopped short of suspending London Irish from the Premiership last night “to respect the wishes of those most affected”. The union has also made clear that the deadline of 4pm on Tuesday is final.

“It is deeply frustrating for all the staff, players and fans that there have been months of multiple missed deadlines,” said Paula Carter, an RFU board member and chair of the union's club financial viability working group. “We are extremely disappointed that the club has so far only funded 50% of the staff and player wages, however, we have to respect the 32 →



▲ *London Irish could follow Wasps and Worcester out of the Premiership*

World Cup row
Wiegman in wrangle over releasing England players

Suzanne Wrack

Sarina Wiegman is caught in a club v country tussle after naming her World Cup squad, with the England manager fearing her plans to get the players together in less than three weeks could be blocked.

Wiegman wants to begin preparations on 19 June and said clubs had been alerted to this in November. But the European Club Association is understood to be united behind a deal it reached with Fifa last month for a release timeframe of 23-29 June. The Football Association is searching for a solution with clubs.

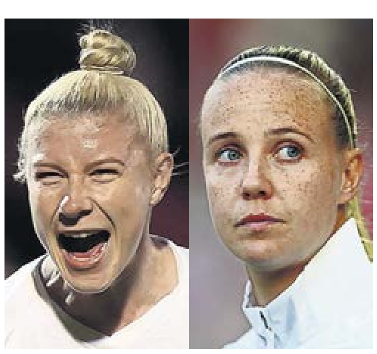
Wiegman said England set their call-up date in November using expertise and experience regarding rest, recovery and preparation. She said they had agreed the plan with the captains' group, then with the wider squad and had spoken to clubs.

“It's frustrating because we have all our plans and we thought we were all set,” Wiegman said. “And then like a month ago, all of a sudden things change … We didn't expect that - it is so late. I do understand, it's about the calendar. It's really hard.”

She described talks as “very constructive” but “not finalised” and emphasised that any delay to her proposed start would be significant with England needing to go to the tournament at their “highest levels”. The World Cup begins on 20 July and England play their first game, against Haiti, two days later.

Wiegman's squad included the striker Beth England, who has scored 12 times in 12 Women's Super League appearances for Tottenham this season, but not Beth Mead. The Arsenal forward sustained an anterior cruciate ligament injury in November and her chances of inclusion were slim given she has not played since.

Millie Bright, who has been injured since 22 March, has been selected. There is no place for Steph Houghton despite the absence of the captain, Leah Williamson, and, more surprisingly, Maya Le Tissier has been left 35 →



▲ *Beth England is in the squad but Beth Mead misses out through injury*


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The Guardian Thursday 1 June 2023

Journal

Opinion and ideas



ILLUSTRATION: SÉBASTIEN THIBAULT

The roads not taken are a relevant part of Britain's history

Martin Kettle



What might have happened if Britain had … But where do you go with that thought? Especially in such grim times as these. If only we had voted against Brexit, perhaps. Or been better prepared for Covid. Gripped the climate crisis more ruthlessly. The list of missed moments and might have beens in our recent past is dauntingly long.

But always remember this. Might have beens are not always more benign options. Missed opportunities can look very different from the Guardian reader-pleasing list above. If only Britain had … Not joined the EU in the first place. Not imposed a Covid lockdown at all. Sent the Windrush generation back. Kept on digging the coal to fire the power stations.

Those who see a divine hand in human affairs don't think much of a question like: "What if events had turned out differently?" Marxists who see history as the working out of the iron laws of dialectical materialism sometimes think the same. EP Thompson, the author of The Making of the English Working Class, once dismissed such speculations as "unhistorical shit".

Thompson was right, gloriously so, about lots of things. But he was wrong about that one. History was the future once. Its formation is contingent, sometimes on accident, sometimes on conscious choices. As a friend said this week, it's why diaries are so illuminating for historians - and now for Covid inquiry chairs. Those who write them do not know what comes next. They are driving without lights into the darkness.

That is why counterfactual "What if?" exercises are not irrelevant to history. Counterfactuals are more than a game. They can deepen history too. The Dutch historian Johan Huizinga put it this way: "The historian must constantly put himself at a point in the past at which the known factors will seem to permit different outcomes." So must the newspaper columnist.

This summer, Berlin is mounting an absorbing exhibition on this subject. Roads Not Taken, which runs at the German Historical Museum until November 2024, provides a subtle look at some of the pivotal moments that shaped German history over the past two centuries. You come to each stage of the exhibition knowing what actually happened. But in each case it also invites you to reflect on what could have happened instead, but did not - the roads not taken.

It is a hugely imaginative show. It takes 14 moments that mattered for Germany,

2

The roads not taken are a relevant part of Britain's history

Martin Kettle

← Continued from front

starting with the year that the Berlin Wall fell, 1989, and then working backwards in a series of episodes. Finally, it arrives at the revolutionary year of 1848-9, when the Frankfurt parliament, elected by male voters in what were then multiple German states and kingdoms, attempted unsuccessfully to create a unified constitutional monarchy with a charter of fundamental rights.

To underline that other outcomes are always possible, the treatment of 1989 is deliberately deflating. Suppose, it asks, East Germans had decided to emulate China's repression of the Tiananmen Square uprising in the summer of 1989 and had cracked down on their own burgeoning democracy protests. East Germany's leader Egon Krenz went to Beijing that autumn to congratulate the Chinese leaders. Repression was a genuine option when he came back. It nearly happened.

So did the 1970s attempt to overthrow Willy Brandt's diplomatic detente with West Germany's eastern neighbours. Back the exhibition goes, through Joseph Stalin's tantalising proposal of a reunified but neutral Germany in 1952, the possibility of the first nuclear bomb being dropped not on Hiroshima but on Ludwigshafen in 1945, the failure of the assassination of Hitler, the rise of the Nazis, the struggles of the Weimar republic and the failure of the peace movement in 1914. At the end, it asks what might have happened in 1849 if the Frankfurt parliament had actually created the democratic, federal and constitutional Germany that proved to be so elusive over the next century and a half. Historically, that may be the biggest might have been of all.

Imagine such an exhibition devoted instead to British history. What are some of the roads not taken? One obvious place to start would be Brexit. But we pretty much know what the road not taken would have looked like there. It would have been a continuation of the conditional and internally besieged Europeanism of the years before 2016. More interesting to imagine what might have happened if Britain had joined the eurozone in 1999. It nearly did.

Journeying backwards, where next? Perhaps initially to the Falklands war of 1982 and the all-too-possible sinking of a British flagship that might have stopped the war in its tracks and perhaps hastened an end to the country's habitual military hubris. Or, looking at domestic politics, the still-neglected road not taken after the Bullock report in 1977, which recommended the culture-changing introduction of German-style co-determination between workers and management in British business.

A generation before that, what about the Conservative party's serious internal debate about whether to dismantle the nationalised health service in 1951? Or the very nearly made appointment of Edward Wood as Neville Chamberlain's successor in 1940 as the Wehrmacht overran France? Or the decision that the pro-Nazi Edward VIII might have taken in 1936 to make a morganatic marriage, which might have seen him on the throne at the same time, determined to sue for peace with Hitler?

Delving further back, there would be sections on Ireland and the empire, perhaps in the context of the William Gladstone home rule bills of 1886 and 1893. Sections on imperial politics might include Joseph Chamberlain's bid to turn back free trade in favour of the empire as a trading bloc, or the early but rare domestic British efforts, by Keir Hardie and others, for Indian independence. The exhibition might end with parliament's rejection of votes for women in 1867.

It would be a formidable exhibition if it ever took place. Yet a British equivalent remains inconceivable. Unlike Germany, which has had to start over again with its national history, we have never made the generous reset about our past that we need. As a result, our approach to our history remains locked in contemporary politics, partisanship and polarisation. We may have shared these islands with each other for centuries. But we still struggle to share our troubled history. And so we do not know where to go next.

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Ukraine

The fog of war is thick, but some strategic and moral truths are clear

Vladimir Putin has never been honest with the Russian people about the war in Ukraine. He lied about the scale of the invasion and the reasons for it. The deception is sustained with propaganda and repression. Outlawing the truth has kept the reality of war mostly out of sight, which is a condition of public acquiescence.

That doesn't mean that millions would rise up against their government if confronted with the true horror of what is being done to Ukraine in their name. The bellicose cult is well embedded in Russian society. But it is easier to support a war that unfolds on television than one that can be heard flying overhead, which is why drone strikes against targets in Moscow this week have rattled the Kremlin.

Ukraine denies involvement in the attack, as it does automatically when military operations cross Russia's borders, in deference to Kyiv's western allies who are made uncomfortable by such bold incursions. There were also reports yesterday of a fire at an oil refinery in the southern Russian Krasnodar region, started by a drone. The raid on Moscow caused little damage but plenty of alarm, which is the point. Getting the war within visible range of ordinary Russians is embarrassing for Mr Putin. It undermines his aura of control. It is harder to pretend things didn't happen when people can see them from their windows.

Most analysts interpret these attacks as part of a disorientation strategy, forcing the Kremlin to divert resources and attention away from the frontline in advance of a Ukrainian counteroffensive to recapture occupied territory. The same applies to the murkier business of raids across the Ukrainian border into Russia's Belgorod region, carried out by far-right, anti-Putin Russian militias. The fog of war is dense, with Ukrainian strategists cultivating uncertainty to unsettle Russian defences and Russian lines of command, tangled amid factional bickering in Moscow and between rival commanders on the ground.

That makes it all the more important to keep a focus on core facts and moral imperatives: Ukraine is the victim of an unprovoked invasion by forces whose primary tactic is terrorising the civilian population into submission by means of indiscriminate murder and destruction. This campaign of atrocity has not succeeded, because Ukrainians have shown heroic fortitude and ingenuity on an epic scale. Also, they have been armed for that endeavour by western governments, which had to balance fear of escalation with a realistic appraisal of the character of Mr Putin's regime, and the threat he posed to European peace if unchecked.

Russia did not start its territorial aggression against Ukraine in 2022, but eight years earlier, in Crimea. Mr Putin did not stop there because Russia wanted to have complete dominance over the domestic and foreign policy orientation of the government in Kyiv. He gambled that the west would look away again. Thankfully, the Russian president was mistaken. He thought then that Russia's appetite for carnage, even from a losing position, would outlast western solidarity with Ukraine. That too turns out to be a miscalculation, so far.

Without a follow-up strategy, Mr Putin's war is sustained by his monstrous pride, readiness to sacrifice conscript soldiers for no measurable purpose and a political apparatus that allows him to cover up his failures. Those conditions make Russia's position look solid. But they could turn out to be brittle, as long as Ukraine's allies stand firm.

Economics

Cap food prices to tame inflation as rate hikes have so far failed to do so

The whisper that the government was considering price caps on food, now the biggest driver of inflation, has produced the inevitable backlash. Out scuttled mini-me Thatcherites and big business PRs waving shrouds. Ministers admitted only to looking into the idea of "voluntary" controls. But the last 15 years have shown that state intervention is considered economic heresy until it becomes politically necessary.

While control of inflation is the job of the Bank of England, the government has made halving inflation this year one of the five pledges on which it wishes to be judged. Since 2008 there has been a turn away from free-market ideology, as it became increasingly clear that the economy was not working in the way textbook models had assumed. This has become obvious in the case of inflation, which mainstream economists mistakenly viewed from the vantage point of the 1970s. Seen from here, rising prices are to do with too much demand in relation to economic capacity on one hand, and too much money chasing too few goods on the other.

This outlook has been overtaken by a new consensus, spearheaded by Isabella Weber, at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, who says that not only is this the wrong interpretation, but so is the idea that rising prices can be tackled by rising interest rates.

Instead, Dr Weber looks at the problem through the lens of distributional conflict between workers and companies. She argues in her latest paper that firms with market power can hike prices, and a widespread acceptance that they have a chance to cash in leads to "seller's inflation". Workers react by attempting to protect real wages. From this perspective, labour conflict is not the origin but the consequence of inflation.

Floating the idea of price controls is a step towards vindicating Dr Weber's thesis - which she first outlined in the Guardian in December 2021 - and the associated phenomenon of greedflation. Her article singled out the long-neglected alternative to rising interest rates to tackle inflation: strategic, targeted price controls. Neoliberals judged this to be an act of madness. But time has been on Dr Weber's side. She ended up advising the German government last year, while many European nations resorted to food price caps. One of the reasons Switzerland had very low inflation in 2022 was its extensive use of price controls.

Given that the Conservatives have intervened with an energy price cap and explicitly acknowledged that this has restrained inflation, it is telling that the government cleaves to old nostrums. As one City analyst wryly noted, "the first rule of profit-led inflation is that you do not talk about profit-led inflation". Even if a more interventionist state is no longer taboo, the shift still needs to be presented as part of a coherent Tory narrative.

That Rishi Sunak is contemplating capping food costs is a tacit admission that without further measures he risks missing his target to cut inflation. The reason Mr Sunak made that promise is that slowing price rises is the only way in which, under his self-imposed rules, he can offer wrong-headed, crowd-pleasing tax cuts before the next election. Such policies have for more than 40 years resulted in growing disillusionment and despair. Mr Sunak's orthodox politics militate against the emergency price-stabilisation policies and inequality-reducing redistribution that would fight inflation in a fair and socially steadying manner. But that is what the country needs.



The shadow chancellor with Labour leader Keir Starmer in April, during the local election campaign in Great Yarmouth
PHOTOGRAPH: STEFAN ROUSSEAU/PA

When right and left are too close for comfort, it's Reevuntism

Larry Elliott



Back in the 1950s, a term was coined to describe the consensus that had allegedly emerged over the way to run the economy in the postwar world. An amalgam of the names of two chancellors of the exchequer – Rab Butler for the Tories and Hugh Gaitskell for Labour – it became known as Butskellism. Dispute has raged ever since over whether there was any such thing, yet, while it is true that the two main parties had their differences, on certain broad principles they did agree: a mixed economy, the permanence of the welfare state and the need to maintain full employment.

After a fashion, Butskellism lasted until the 1970s, with the governments of Ted Heath and Harold Wilson struggling to keep the postwar show on the road. Its demise was only sealed by a combination of stagflation and the arrival of Margaret Thatcher.

Whisper it softly, but Butskellism has returned. While there are still areas where the Conservatives and Labour disagree, these tend to be managerial and technical, rather than ideological. On the big issues not much separates them, with both parties shifting towards the centre in recent years. For want of a better word, let's call it Reevuntism in honour of the shadow chancellor, Rachel Reeves, and the man she wants to replace at the Treasury, Jeremy Hunt (the Economist has gone for Mr Heeves).

One obvious example of Reevuntism is the cross-party consensus over Brexit. Hunt and Reeves were both remainers in the 2016 referendum campaign; both now insist that Brexit can and will be a success. Neither party wants a second referendum, or even a renegotiation that would involve going back into the single market. Rishi Sunak and Keir Starmer are both keen to remove some of the trade friction between the UK and the EU, but that is as far as it goes.

For a variety of reasons, the right's vision of a post-Brexit Britain in which the economy would be made more competitive as a result of lower taxes and deregulation has never materialised. Nor was it the sort of Brexit leave voters in the less well-off parts of the country wanted anyway.

Starmer and Reeves hope to convince the public that there is a better way to do Brexit. They will be helped in this by the second strand of the new consensus: the recognition that a bigger and a more activist state is here to stay. By no means all Tories are comfortable with the idea of the government running large chunks of the rail network, or that tax as a share of national output is on course to rise to its highest level in seven decades. Liz Truss based her campaign to be prime minister on the idea that the way to grow the economy faster was through cutting taxes and red tape.

> **Hunt wants to reduce the national debt, but so would Reeves. Both parties would be prepared to borrow, but only to invest**

Increasingly, though, the right of the Tory party looks as if it is fighting a losing battle. The government has been paying a chunk of domestic energy bills. It is in talks with Tata, the owner of Jaguar Land Rover, over a £500m subsidy to build a battery factory in the UK. In the clearest sign that these are indeed different times, ministers have been urging supermarkets to bring down food costs through voluntary price curbs.

Sunak and Hunt might not like this, any more than Conservatives in the late 1940s and early 1950s liked the idea of a National Health Service, or state ownership of the coalmines. But the dream of a free-market utopia in which goods, money and people moved unchecked around the world has slowly faded over the past 15 years.

The financial crisis, the pandemic and geopolitical tension have resulted in economic polices that are more interventionist, protectionist and centred on national self-sufficiency. Sunak's desire to turn the UK into a science and technology superpower is one example of this new reality. Starmer's green prosperity plan is another.

The third strand of the new consensus involves the way in which the economy is run. Both parties accept that interest rates should be set by an independent Bank of England, that the government's tax and spending plans should be audited by the Office for Budget Responsibility, and that the best long-term way to boost growth is through supply-side reform. Hunt wants to reduce the national debt as a share of output, but so would Reeves if she was chancellor. Both parties would be prepared to borrow – but only for investment.

When he was at the Treasury, Sunak borrowed more than any chancellor in peacetime to save the economy from collapse during the early stages of the pandemic. Would Labour have followed the same approach? Almost certainly. Would a Labour chancellor now be raising taxes – as Hunt is – to bring down public borrowing? Almost certainly.

Reevuntism has involved both parties tacking back towards the centre. This has not been an entirely trouble-free process for Starmer, especially over Brexit, where many party members would support rejoining the EU. Politically, though, the new consensus is much less problematic for Labour than it is for the Conservatives.

In part, that's because the Tories have been forced to abandon so much of what they once believed in as a result of changing economic circumstances. In part, it is because the public has moved leftwards on the economy, becoming not just accustomed to but also welcoming a more interventionist approach. But, essentially, Labour is comfortable with the idea of a more activist state and the Tories are not.



So it's back to Benefits Street all over again

Frances Ryan



Few things are ever really new. British politics – and the media ecosystem that maintains it – effectively regurgitates the same talking points on repeat, a kind of Groundhog Day where the key players may appear different but the familiar destructive patterns are ever present.

It is a decade since then chancellor George Osborne launched cuts to the benefits system totalling tens of billions of pounds, and with them, fuelled rhetoric so toxic that it caused an increase in hate crime towards disabled people. This was the era of Benefits Street and the Sun's Beat the Cheat campaign, when it was quite normal for a newspaper to invite readers to report disabled neighbours to a benefit fraud hotline.

Fast forward 10 years, and we bleakly find ourselves back here again, with labour shortages and a population in ever poorer health. Now politicians and the media are setting their sights on the "economically inactive" and "record numbers" of long-term sick. "Millions paid benefits without ever having to find a job," a recent front page in the Daily Telegraph proclaimed. It has the frenzied air of a piece of investigative journalism that has uncovered some sort of organised fraud racket.

In fact, what they've discovered is the welfare state: these "millions" are simply people who are too disabled or ill to work, with sickness benefits being rebranded as "jobless benefits". The dog whistle is a familiar tune: hordes of disabled benefit claimants could hold down a job if only they weren't so idle.

Or as Channel 5's Jeremy Vine Show recently put it in a debate about "cracking down" on "jobless benefits" for sick people: "Is it wrong for taxpayers to fund them indefinitely?" This is what the boundaries of legitimate debate being pushed looks like: TV audiences being asked to weigh in from their living rooms on whether minorities are worthy of state support. Before you know it, "should we leave the disabled to starve to death?" is just a rational form of fiscal inquiry.

It does not take a scholar of history to know that times of economic crisis bring the vilification of marginalised groups. Like the financial crash a decade ago, the cost of living crisis of recent months has combined with gaps in the labour market to create prime conditions for demonising those whose health means they cannot earn a wage. Even the term "economically inactive" is loaded – a capitalist value judgment against people whose bodies "fail" to be productive and therefore useful.

That increasing numbers of families are working all day and still unable to put food on the table makes this story all the easier to sell. The wink to the camera is clear: while you're struggling to pay the electric bill with your hard-earned wages, hordes of scamming benefit claimants are living the high life on your taxes. The Department for Work and Pensions' own research showing that some disabled people can't afford food or heating on their benefits is, apparently, irrelevant.

The benefit of this for those in government and their backers is clear enough: shift responsibility away from the policy failures that have actually caused the problems while distracting the public with a scapegoat. Seen in this context, the baiting headlines emerging in recent weeks are not some innocent error – they are exactly as intended. Sometimes, a mob's pitchforks can look a lot like a broadsheet front page.

Perhaps there is some hope; contrary to the current media narrative, at least two-thirds of people think universal credit rates are too low. And yet the conditions of the past decade – Brexit, a pandemic, lower living standards – point to a future of more instability and division, not less.

A growing consensus within the political class has blocked any real change in attitudes towards social security. Instead of challenging rightwing tropes, the opposition is highlighting barely existent benefit fraud. More gravely, the collective failure to provide any real answers to people's problems will only encourage the public to find other places to lay their resentment and blame.

In this climate, sick and disabled people are not so much human beings with needs and feelings as burdens on the state. The ease with which we keep returning to this conclusion as a society deserves as much attention as how we can change the narrative. What we can be sure of is clear: those with power and resources will always be ready to stoke the worst of our instincts to hurt those with neither.



The backlash against slavery research

More and more institutions are setting out to examine their historical links to enslavement – but the fallout at one Cambridge college was unexpectedly bitter. By *Samira Shackle*

ILLUSTRATION: *Mark Harris*

When the historian Nicolas Bell-Romero started a job researching Cambridge University's past links to transatlantic slavery three years ago, he did not expect to be pilloried in the national press by anonymous dons as "a 'woke activist' with an agenda". Before his work was even published, it would spark a bitter conflict at the university – with accusations of bullying and censorship that were quickly picked up by rightwing papers as a warning about "fanatical" scholars tarnishing Britain's history.

Bell-Romero, originally from Australia, had recently finished a PhD at Cambridge. He was at the start of his academic career and eager to prove himself. This was the ideal post-doctoral position: a chance to dig into the university's archives to explore faculty and alumni links to slavery, and whether these links had translated into profit for Cambridge. It was the kind of work that, Bell-Romero said, "seems boring to the layperson" – spending days immersed in dusty archives and logbooks, exploring 18th- and 19th-century financial records. But as a historian, it was thrilling. It offered a chance to make a genuinely fresh contribution to burgeoning research about Britain's relationship to slavery.

In the spring of 2020, Bell-Romero and another post-doctoral researcher, Sabine Cadeau, began work on the legacies of enslavement inquiry. Cadeau and Bell-Romero had a wide-ranging brief: to examine how the university gained from slavery, through specific financial bequests and gifts, but also to investigate how its scholarship might have reinforced, validated or challenged race-based thinking.

Cambridge was never a centre of industry like Manchester, Liverpool or Bristol, cities in which historic links to slavery are deep and obviously apparent – but as one of the oldest and wealthiest institutions in the country, the university makes an interesting case study for how intimately profits from slavery were entwined with British life. Given how many wealthy people in Britain in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries were slaveholders, or invested in the slave economy, it was a reasonable expectation that both faculty and alumni may have benefited financially, and that this may have translated into donations to the university.

In the past decade, universities in the UK and US have commissioned similar research. Top US universities such as Harvard and Georgetown found they had enslaved people and benefited from donations connected to slavery. The first major research effort in the UK, at the University of Glasgow, began in 2018, but soon similar projects launched at Bristol, Edinburgh, Oxford, Manchester and Nottingham. Stephen Mullen, co-author of the Glasgow report, told me that he was surprised not only by the extent of the university's financial ties to slavery, but by how much that wealth is still funding these institutions.

In their report, Mullen and his co-author Simon Newman established a methodology for working out the difficult question of how the financial value of historic donations and investments might translate into modern money, which produces a range of estimates rather than a single number: in the case of Glasgow, between £16.7m and £198m. In response to the research, the University of Glasgow initiated a "reparative justice" programme, including a £20m partnership with the University of the West Indies and a new centre for slavery studies.

All of this marks a dramatic change in how Britain thinks about slavery, and especially the idea of reparations. For the most part, when Britain has engaged with this history, the tendency has been to focus on the successful campaign for abolition; historians of slavery like to repeat the famous quip that Britain invented the slave trade solely to abolish it.

This wider trend is reflected in Cambridge. As far as the story of slavery and the University of Cambridge goes, perhaps the most well-known fact is that some of Britain's key abolitionists – William Wilberforce, Thomas Clarkson – were educated there. But British celebration of the abolition of slavery in the 1800s has tended to elide the awkward question of who the abolitionists were fighting against, and the point that the wealth and economic power generated by slavery did not disappear when the Abolition Act was passed.

"It was interesting to me that there weren't so many questions about the other side – were slaveholders educated here? Did slaveholders give benefactions? Did students invest in the different slave-trading companies?" Bell-Romero said. "It's not about smashing what came before, it's about contributing and building on histories."

Cambridge consists of the central university and 31 colleges, each of which has its own administration, decision-making powers and budgets. Most of the university's wealth is situated within colleges, and from the outset, the legacies of enslavement inquiry relied to an extent on colleges granting Bell-Romero and Cadeau access to their archives. This wasn't always easy. "The entire research experience, even now, remains a constant struggle for archival access, an ongoing political tug of war," Cadeau told me in late 2022. "There was financial support for the research from the central university, but mixed feelings and outright opposition were both widespread."

So when Bell-Romero was approached by Gonville and Caius, the college where he had recently completed his PhD, to conduct a separate piece of research into the college's links to slavery, he was delighted. Caius, as it is commonly known (it's pronounced "Keys"), was founded in 1348. One of the oldest and wealthiest colleges in Cambridge, it is also seen as one of the most conservative and traditional. The college offered him a year's contract, working one day a week, meaning he had about 50 days to do the archival research and write the report – a very short time for a broad brief.

As with the university inquiry, the idea was to look at all possible links to slavery. Alongside investigating whether the college held investments in slave-trading entities such as the East India, South Sea and Royal African Companies, he was asked to explore any connections to slavery among alumni, students and faculty. Not only would this be interesting in its own right, but hugely useful for the wider project. He said yes. "I just thought – this is wonderful, unrestricted access to the archive," he said. "That's a dream for a historian. It's as good as it gets."



Graffiti on the wall of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge in 2020
ALAMY

But it was at Gonville and Caius that the problems would begin. The reaction to Bell-Romero's draft report caused a rift among faculty – with some pushing to prevent its publication entirely. According to the critics, the work suggested all white people "carry the taint of original sin" and that it was motivated by an "agenda" to "implicate" the college in slavery.

What happened at the college demonstrates the collision between two different worldviews: one that sees research into the history of slavery as a routine, but vital, academic exercise; and another that sees it as a biased undertaking and a threat to the way historical knowledge is produced. The intensity of this clash sheds some light on why it has proved so difficult to reappraise Britain's past.

When the Cambridge vice-chancellor Stephen Toope announced the legacies of enslavement inquiry, he said he wanted the university to "acknowledge its role during that dark phase of human history", adding: "We cannot change the past, but nor should we seek to hide from it."

Momentum was building around institutions looking into their links to slavery. Historians working on this area see this as a valuable addition to historic knowledge and a way to understand how the profits of slavery shaped Britain. Many of the richest people in 18th- and 19th-century Britain were involved in the slave trade and the plantation economy. The trade and distribution of goods produced by enslaved people helped fuel Britain's development.

While enslaved people were mostly overseas, in colonies, out of sight, slavery funded British wealth and institutions from the Bank of England to the Royal Mail. The extent to which modern Britain was shaped by the profits of the transatlantic slave economy was made even clearer with the launch in 2013 of the Legacies of British Slave-ownership project at University College London. It digitised the records of tens of thousands of people who claimed compensation from the government when colonial slavery was abolished in 1833, making it far easier to see how the wealth created by slavery spread throughout Britain after abolition. "Slave-ownership," the researchers concluded, "permeated the British elites of the early 19th century and helped form the elites of the 20th century."

But as Bell-Romero would write in his report on Caius, "the legacies of enslavement encompassed far more than the ownership of plantations and investments in the slave trade". Scholars undertaking this kind of archival research typically look at the myriad ways in which individuals linked to an institution might have profited from slavery – from direct involvement in the trade of enslaved people or the goods they produced, to one-step-removed financial interests such as shares in slave-trading entities such as the South Sea or East India Companies.

Bronwen Everill, an expert in the history of slavery and a fellow at Caius, points out "how widespread and mundane all of this was". Mapping these connections, she says, simply "makes it much harder to hold the belief that Britain suddenly rose to power through its innate qualities; actually, this great wealth is linked to a very specific moment of wealth creation through the dramatic exploitation of African labour."

This academic interest in forensically quantifying British institutions' involvement in slavery has been steadily growing for several decades. But in recent years, this has been accompanied by calls for Britain to re-evaluate its imperial history, starting with the Rhodes Must Fall campaign in 2015. The Black Lives Matter protests of 2020 turbo-charged the debate, and in response, more institutions in the UK commissioned research on their historic links to slavery – including the Bank of England, Lloyd's, the National Trust, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Guardian.

But as public interest in exploring and quantifying Britain's historic links to slavery exploded in 2020, so too did a conservative backlash against "wokery".



Critics argue that the whole enterprise of examining historic links to slavery is an exercise in denigrating Britain and seeking out evidence for a foregone conclusion. Debate quickly ceases to be about the research itself - and becomes a proxy for questions of national pride. "What seems to make people really angry is the suggestion of change [in response to this sort of research], or the removal of specific things - statues, names - which is taken as a suggestion that people today should be guilty," said Natalie Zacek, an academic at the University of Manchester who is writing a book on English universities and slavery. "I've never quite gotten to the bottom of that - no one is saying you, today, are a terrible person because you're white. We're simply saying there is another story here."

For the critics of this work, campaigns to remove statues, revise university curricula, or investigate how institutions may have benefited from slavery are all attempts to censure the past. While this debate often plays out in public with emotive articles about "cancellation" and "doing Britain down", conservative historians emphasise the danger of imposing value judgments on historical events or people. David Abulafia is a life fellow at Caius, and an influential figure in the college. Best known for his acclaimed history of the medieval Mediterranean, in recent years he has become a prominent conservative commentator. (Some of his eye-catching Telegraph columns have argued that "Cambridge is succumbing to the woke virus" and that the British Museum "might as well shut" if it "surrenders the Rosetta Stone".) When I spoke to Abulafia, he struck a less strident tone. "What worries me is that modern politics is intruding into the way we interpret the past," he said. "One has somehow to be able to chronicle the past without getting caught up with moralising about the current state of the world."

Yet the historians working on studies of slavery or imperialism are often bemused by this concern, pointing out that all history is a product of the time in which it is written. "The job of a historian is to uncover the past and try to work out what happened, why it did, and what consequences and effects that had," said Michael Taylor, a historian of colonial slavery and the British empire. "We're allowed to focus on and celebrate abolition, but the previous 200 years of slavery are apparently taboo. That doesn't make any sense."

Every historian of slavery I spoke to emphasised that their research primarily involves archives and financial records. In their view, the work of many institutions mapping their own links to slavery helps to build up a more detailed picture of how Britain was shaped by its relationship with slavery and the slave trade.

Abulafia agreed that history is about "the accumulation of evidence, in as accurate and careful a way as possible", but argued that "there is a danger of manipulating the past in the interest of current political concerns, one of which might be the idea that the ascendancy of the west has been achieved through a systematic policy of racism". He questioned the point of tracing "profits from the slave trade that alumni might then have converted into benefactions" since, in the 18th century, using your wealth to fund scholarship might have been seen as virtuous. "It's that challenge of trying to get one's head around values, which are so remote from our own," he said.

Historians of slavery argue that establishing these flows of money does not equate to moral judgment. As Taylor says: "This research simply helps us piece together a picture of what Britain was like when slave-trading and slave-holding was legal, which would otherwise not be there." But critics do not accept this.

Life fellows occupy a strange position at Caius. One ex-student said it was 'the most luxurious nursing home in the country'

Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge (centre)
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On 17 June 2020, as Black Lives Matter protests raged across the country, activists in Cambridge spraypainted the heavy wooden medieval gate that separates Caius from the busy high street it sits on: "Eugenics is genocide. Fisher must fall." The graffiti referred to a stained-glass window installed in the Caius dining hall in 1989, commemorating the statistician RA Fisher. The window was an abstract design; squares of coloured glass arranged in a Latin Square, an image from the cover of Fisher's influential 1935 book The Design of Experiments.

Commonly thought of as the most important figure in 20th-century statistics, Fisher was also a prominent eugenicist. He helped to found the Cambridge University Eugenics Society and, after the second world war, wrote letters in support of a Nazi scientist who had worked under Josef Mengele. The window had been controversial for years: a substantial number of students - and some faculty - wanted it to be taken down. The debate was reignited by the graffiti. A Caius student launched an online petition, writing: "Caius students and Fellows eat, converse and celebrate in space that also acts as a commemoration of our racist history." It gained more than 1,400 signatures.

But there was pushback. Cambridge colleges are like universities within a university; faculty usually work both for their university department, where they deliver lectures, and for their college, where they provide tutorials. Students live at the college for at least part of their degree and typically have much of their teaching there. Despite a wide range of specialisms and political views among the faculty, and a proactive student body, Caius is broadly seen as one of Cambridge's most conservative colleges, largely due to its vociferous community of life fellows. Someone becomes a life fellow after teaching at Caius for 20 years. Life fellows - who make up about 25% of the total fellowship, similar to the number of female fellows - occupy a strange position in college life; most do not teach any more, but have a room at the college and can eat at the dining hall. One former Caius student described the college as "the most luxurious nursing home in the country".

Many Cambridge colleges have some form of life fellowship for retired professors, but Caius is unusual in that they have full voting rights and can sit on the college council, a small executive body on which staff serve rotating terms. This means they have as much of a say in the running of the college as current faculty. "They functionally run the place," said Everill. Michael Taylor, the historian, went to Caius as an undergraduate in 2007 and stayed until he finished his PhD in 2014. When he sat as a student representative on the college council, he was struck by the dysfunction of this system. "The sheer indifference to the experience of students was shocking," he told me. "A few good people were - and are - trying to reform the college, but it's basically a form of feudal governance." This has often led to a situation where faculty at Caius are pulling in different directions; one primarily concerned with the preservation of tradition and the good name of the college, and another with student experience and other day-to-day concerns of a modern academic institution.

A number of life fellows had been taught by Fisher and felt that his pioneering work on statistics stood separately to his other views. "It really sparked all hell," said Vic Gatrell, a historian and life fellow at Caius. Gatrell, in common with many of the working faculty and the students, thought the window should come down. This marked him out among the life fellows, most of whom

wanted the window to stay. Gatrell is in his 80s and has worked at Caius since the 1970s. In those 50 years, nothing had provoked such strong emotions. "In all these years, we never inquired into each other's politics," he told me. But now, colleagues he'd lived and worked with for decades walked past in the corridor without saying hello, or sat separately in the dining hall. "It was a microcosm of what's happening in the nation at large," he said.

In June 2020, Caius removed the Fisher window. But the dividing lines were there to stay. In a long article for the Critic titled Cancelled by his college, the eminent geneticist, life fellow Anthony Edwards – who had been mentored by Fisher, and had proposed the installation of the window – rejected the allegation that Fisher was racist, or even a leading eugenicist. He decried the fact that "now the college Fisher loved has turned its back on him". Within college, life fellows spoke of Fisher being cancelled, dishonoured and targeted unfairly by BLM protesters. "The removal of the Fisher window opened a wound that still continues in various ways," said one research fellow.

It was against this backdrop that Bell-Romero got to work in the Caius archives in the autumn of 2020. The Fisher window had been removed, but bad blood remained. Still, Bell-Romero – who was not based fulltime at the college – was blissfully unaware. He had a specific brief: to examine whether students, alumni, staff or benefactors had links to slavery. Once a week, he went into the archive, housed in a grand 19th-century building next to the lush green lawn of Caius Court. The archive spans the full eight centuries of the college's life, from medieval estate records to the personal papers of modern alumni and faculty. The research was a low-key pursuit – just Bell-Romero and the college archivist, going through paper records.

As per his brief, he looked widely: "It's not just about people owning plantations – it's about small pots of money, small investments," he said. Gradually, he traced a number of connections to slavery, through former students and staff who had investments in slave-holding companies. Previous histories of Caius had identified two sizeable donations to the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade in the late 18th century. But in the archives, Bell-Romero found that the financial benefits from enslavement outweighed the college's contribution to abolition.

His draft report was a modest document of about 50 pages. His key finding was that the college once had financial interests in the South Sea Company, an organisation that "sent 64,780 enslaved persons to the Spanish Americas". These were in the form of annuities and stocks, gained through donations left to the college by alumni. He wrote that through these benefactions "the College's fate – like so many other educational institutions in Great Britain – became intertwined with the imperial commercial economy, with slavery being one of its most profitable ventures". Mapping this out, along with details of students from slave-owning families educated at Caius, Bell-Romero concluded that this story was "not singular, but indicative of the longstanding ties of British institutions and individuals to chattel slavery and coerced labour".

These findings didn't surprise Bell-Romero. "It was what you'd expect for a rich college that has existed for many hundreds of years," he said. When he submitted the draft in the autumn of 2021, he did not realise how contentious it would be.

Bronwen Everill was head of the Caius working group on the legacies of enslavement project. Bell-Romero's report was a draft – it needed editing – but Everill thought it was a solid piece of work with uncontroversial conclusions. "Basically, the finding of this report was – like almost all these institutions – Caius had a little bit of a hand in slavery, but it was not fundamentally based on financing from the slave trade," she told me. Bell-Romero's report only included archival research. But Everill and her three colleagues on the working group were expected to come up with suggestions for next steps.

Part of the remit of the Cambridge University



'The report makes uncomfortable reading. The College is 675 years old and it is important we acknowledge our complex past'

ALAMY

inquiry was to consider how these legacies are reflected in the modern day. The most prominent example of this work – at Glasgow – had led to a substantial reparative package. That project had passed without controversy. But in the intervening years, the political climate had changed. ("Any study now is being scrutinised from the outset, and the credibility and objectivity of academic historians is being questioned by some critics," Mullen, the Glasgow researcher, told me.)

There are various mechanisms for working out how much historical sums are worth in today's currency. For his report, Bell-Romero used an academic database called Measuring Worth, created by a group of economic historians to calculate estimates of the "present value" of past assets – which the Glasgow report had also employed. Bell-Romero wrote that "the calculation of historical value is not an exact science – indeed, these figures are at best a rough estimate." On the basis of the report, the working group proposed that Caius offer funding to two Black Mphil students.

Typically, a drafted piece of research might be assessed and edited by other experts in the field; historians with some knowledge of its time period and geography. But the quirks of college life meant that the process at Caius was different. The report was being published on behalf of the college, so in December, the draft report was circulated for feedback to all fellows and life fellows, regardless of their expertise.

In January 2022, responses rolled in. Some highlighted mistakes: confusion over the name of a historical figure, and minor spelling errors. Others questioned the entire motivation for the project. In a lengthy response, Abulafia said that people in the past may have been involved in many things that today seem unsavoury, and asked: "If British people carry the taint of original sin by all those who are white supposedly being complicit in the slave trade, how much more are we complicit in all these activities that still go on around us?" He concluded that the report must "stand back from the past and not make it into a canvas they can slather with the moral wisdom of a particular fashionable ideology".

Prof Joe Herbert, a life fellow in medicine, wrote that the report "clearly has an agenda: to implicate Caius as much as possible in supporting and benefiting [from] slavery". He questioned the logic of funding Black MPhil students: "There is an undoubted shortfall of black applicants (not other ethnic groups); but this is not a direct result of slavery 200 years ago, and we absolve ourselves from our responsibility by thinking it is, and offering a solution which is no solution."

Everill was surprised by the tenor of the responses, and particularly that the most strident criticism had come from life fellows who were not scholars of Britain or empire. To her, it felt like a misunderstanding of the project and a recycling of culture-war talking points. (Abulafia suggested the report was "infused with the ideas of critical race theory".) Many of the people most affronted by the report were the same who had been most defensive of the Fisher window. "There's a lot of people who read about the culture wars and think they are personally under attack by a woke mob," Everill said a few months later.

A number of responses queried – in strong terms – the mechanism for working out historical inflation, which the critics argued had produced an implausibly wide range of estimated values, and the reparative suggestion. "They seemed to think we were saying we, today, should be guilty – rather than that the institution made this money, and so the institution should think about distributing this money," said Everill.

Bell-Romero was frustrated that some of the notes appeared to be responding to points he hadn't made. "It had nothing to do with what I found; it was just about the political bent of what they thought the research was about," he said. "The point was never to denigrate the college."

The college council told the working group they had to respond in particular to Abulafia's criticisms, because of his high standing. Together, they drafted a 5,000-word response, accepting some criticisms and disputing others. They wrote: "The report is not admonishing past Caians, or saying that 'Caians should not have' done something … The very point is the banality … The report is recording the connections to a system that was widespread throughout British economic life. We are not asking for people to judge the people of the past. We are simply presenting a more complete picture so that we, today, can think about what we want to do with that information."

Rather than defend the report in front of the college council, Everill thought it would be more productive to hold an open meeting. It took place in early March, an opportunity for anyone to ask questions of Bell-Romero and the working group. Bell-Romero expected a big turnout. But only one person turned up: Joe Herbert. According to others present at the meeting, he walked into the room and declared: "This is a terrible report." That set the tone. Members of the working group said that Herbert, who declined to be interviewed for this story, called history a "crap discipline" and suggested that the low admission rates for Black students at Cambridge were not connected to the history of slavery.

Everill was appalled. At one point, she said, she stood up and said: "No, absolutely not, I will not put up with that kind of tone." Herbert responded: "Sit down, woman," adding, "You're not in charge here." In a later email to Everill, he acknowledged this, saying: "I told you to shut up because you were shrieking at me. You weren't attempting to say anything." (Contacted before publication, Herbert said that "inappropriate language" used at the meeting "was not limited to me", but denied saying history was a "crap discipline".)

After the open meeting, Everill was copied on an email thread in which this group of three life fellows continued to attack the report. They did not acknowledge the 5,000-word response, writing: "You never tried to explain anything." In the emails, another life fellow, the philosopher Jimmy Altham, suggested that Everill may be "dyslexic" because of some typos; Herbert said that "the important thing is that this disastrous report is not published in the college's name"; and Abulafia replied "I 100% agree". Everill made a formal complaint of harassment against Altham and Herbert. The complaint against Herbert was upheld; but not against Altham. Herbert was

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encouraged to apologise, but he did not.

The scholars engaged in the research had fulfilled a narrow brief to examine the college's financial links to slavery and come up with a proposal for action. But the life fellows who objected seemed to be responding to something larger; the idea that the legacies of slavery might still be shaping our present.

When I spoke with Abulafia, he didn't want to discuss the specifics of events at Caius, which he described as "a source of division and contention", but he did talk more broadly about this area of research. "It started with one or two Oxbridge colleges conducting these investigations and by and large, not much came out of it," he said. "Why are they looking into it? It's become a sort of fad, if you like. If we want to look at issues to do with the way human beings were being badly oppressed in the early 19th century, we might also want to look at children down the mines in this country. There are horrific stories. I just wish we could recognise that sort of unholy behaviour, which certainly took place in the slave trade, is also taking place on our own soil between white people – if we're going to make it about a given colour, which I hate doing, actually." Citing other examples of historic exclusion and oppression, such as child labour, he said: "Let's tell those stories and not put so many resources into the legacies of slavery. I think we've got the basic idea on that now."

Soon after the disastrous open meeting, the college council suggested that Bell-Romero redraft his report in collaboration with a life fellow in history who was not one of the primary critics – saying he would "know the fellowship tone". But Bell-Romero was affronted. "It's censorship, being babysat to write your own piece," he said. "That's where I drew the line." He declined. With no clear plan of action, he thought the report might never be published. He continued with the Cambridge inquiry and tried to forget about it. But that would not be so easy.

In late May, as the Easter term edged towards its end, Tommy Castellani, a second-year undergraduate, was sitting in the Caius dining hall when a friend mentioned that his history tutor had been tweeting about a dispute. Castellani had recently started writing news stories for Varsity, the Cambridge student paper, and he wanted to know more. His friend pulled up Everill's Twitter account. "It is literally my favourite thing, waking up on a lovely bank holiday Sunday to a whole string of emails from angry *life fellows* calling me names. The best." (She was referring to the "dyslexic" comment.) Castellani started to dig into it.

"I realised this was going to be a big story," he said. "There's a culture war in college, and you can see it in the council papers – people feel divided." He got hold of emails, spoke to Everill and interviewed Bell-Romero, who asked not to be named in the story. In June, Varsity published Castellani's account of the fallout, including quotes from the life fellows' emails and details of what was said at the open meeting. Castellani had approached the college for comment on the "racist and sexist" undertones of comments at the open meeting.

But when the Telegraph picked up on the Caius dispute three weeks later, the story had a very different slant. Incorrectly stating that the Caius research had been initiated "in the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement" (the college had actually started the process of researching its links to slavery in spring 2019, a year before the protests), the story claimed the report included "incorrect monetary conversions".

The paper identified Bell-Romero by name as a "woke activist" who had produced "shambolic" work that caused the crisis. Bell-Romero couldn't access the article at first because of the paywall. When he did, his first response was horror. His second was to laugh. "I'd been struggling to explain to my friends what this had been like, and now I could point to the Telegraph article and say – that's the tenor of the feedback we received."

Although the reporter had clearly been briefed by at least one life fellow, the critics remained anonymous, even when quoted at length saying that these "attempts to rewrite history fall at the first hurdle".

Below: a share certificate for the South Sea Company, in which Gonville and Caius College was found to have had financial interests

GETTY

Meanwhile Bell-Romero – a precariously employed early-career academic (wrongly described in the article as a "student") – was named, and his professionalism questioned. A few days later, the Telegraph story was picked up by the Times, which has devoted increasing attention to campus conflicts in recent years.

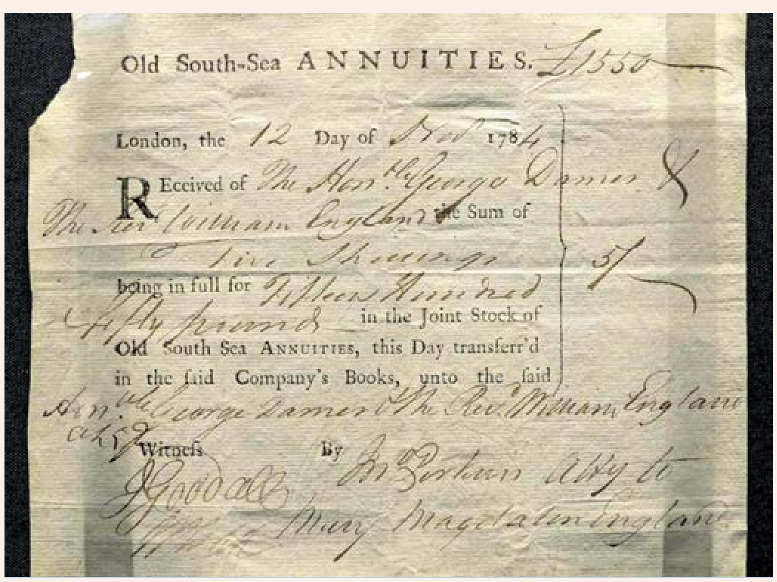
After the stories came out, Bell-Romero was contacted by a number of other researchers working on topics related to decolonisation and slavery who had been the subject of hit-jobs in the rightwing press. Time and again, researchers I interviewed for this story insisted on answering questions by email rather than speaking on the phone or in person, citing the fear of being misrepresented. "I do worry about a chilling effect," says Everill. "There are a bunch of these postdocs available at the moment, and people who don't want to be named and shamed in the national media might decide not to apply."

The conflict at Caius seemed to be part of a wider faltering of legacies of slavery research – through overt backlash, or institutions announcing projects with great fanfare but not following through with support and funding. Hilary Beckles, the vice-chancellor of the University of the West Indies and the author of Britain's Black Debt, calls this pattern "research and run" – where universities do the archival work, then say a quick sorry and run from the implications of the findings, leaving the researchers exposed.

As far as anyone could see, Caius had backed away from publishing Bell-Romero's report after the controversy; Everill, head of the working group, was not sure it would ever be published. But in July, a newspaper submitted a freedom of information request about it. The following month, the Caius report was published online, with the proposal for MPhil funding removed. It was not covered anywhere. "Probably because it turns out that wasn't actually that inflammatory," Everill said. In a statement to the Guardian, the master of the college, Prof Pippa Rogerson, said: "The report makes uncomfortable reading for all those affiliated to Caius. The College is 675 years old and it is important we acknowledge our complex past."

In September, Bell-Romero and Cadeau's much larger Cambridge University legacies of enslavement project was published. It found that Cambridge fellows had been involved in the East India Company and other slave-trading entities, and that the university had directly invested in the South Sea Company. They wrote: "Such financial involvement both helped to facilitate the slave trade and brought very significant financial benefits to Cambridge." The report was covered by major news outlets, but did not provoke a particularly strong response.

Critics argue that examining historic links to slavery is an exercise in seeking evidence for a foregone conclusion


Old South-Sea ANNUITIES.

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Witness By

The conflict over the Caius research suggests that these disputes often have little to do with the archival research itself, or its conclusions. In the view of the critics, the research is discredited by its intention to correct past wrongs. Even when the researchers insist that they are not trying to assign blame or guilt, the critics insist in return – not without some justification – that whether or not this is the intention, it is almost always the effect. This is presumably why they disapprove of doing the research to begin with.

Seen this way, it is a standoff that has no hope of resolution. When I spoke to Abulafia, he questioned the point of the research: "Cambridge University and its role in slavery is not, to my mind, as big a question as all sorts of other questions one could argue about the slave trade," he said. But scholars working on the area argue that this is precisely the point; to understand institutions' relationships to slavery, whether small or large, and through this to build a fuller picture of the past. "When we do this research, we're just adding another layer, another perspective," said Bell-Romero. The critics, of course, see this empirical modesty as disingenuous. But the archival work carries on, all over the country, and the diametrically opposing views on the very premise will inevitably lead to more conflicts.

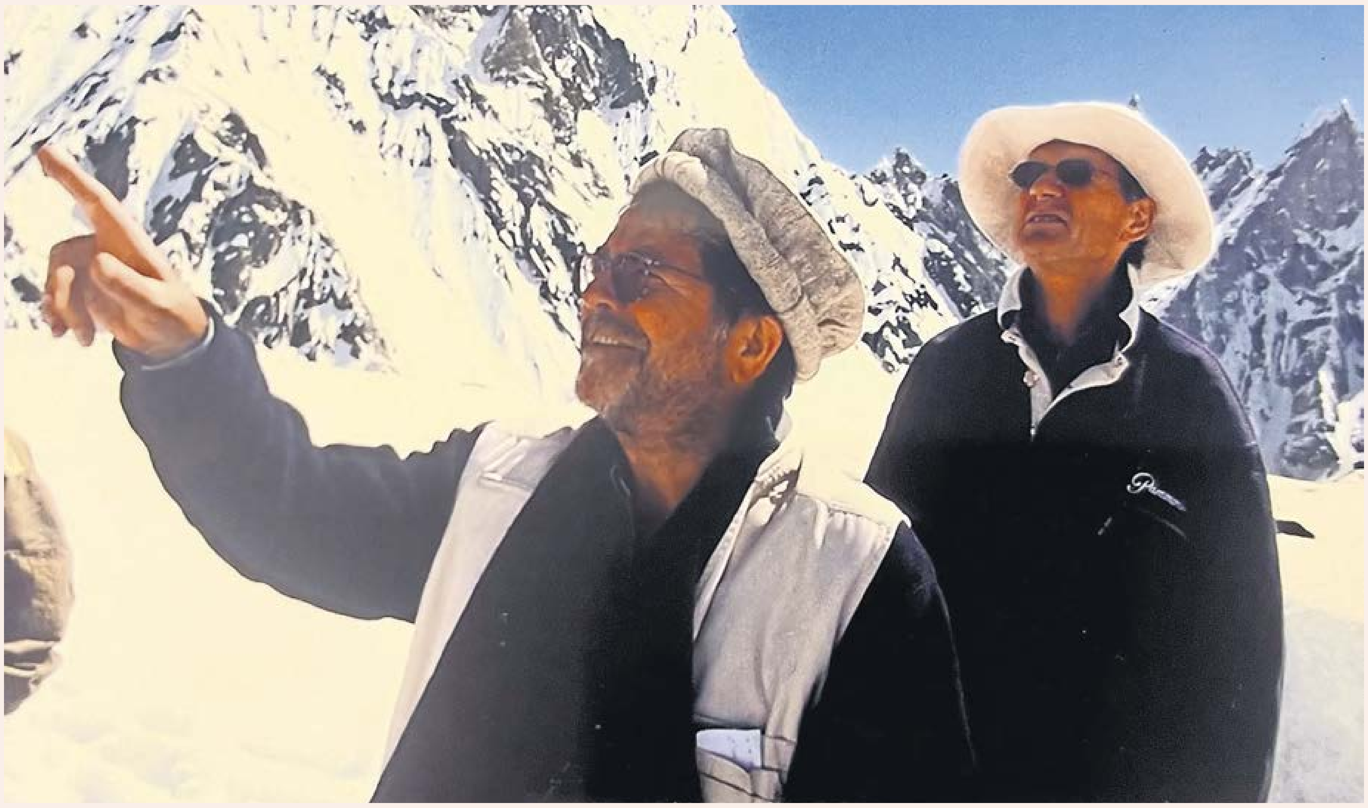
In late September, Cadeau and Bell-Romero organised an academic conference about reparations, held at the Møller Institute, a starkly modern building west of Cambridge city centre. A few days before, it was covered in the Telegraph, which quoted anonymous sources describing it as "propagandist" and "fanatical" and Abulafia saying: "It's that sense that it's going to be one-sided that concerns me." Cadeau, who is now a lecturer of diaspora history at Soas in London, was unfazed. "What I am most concerned about are legacies of racism. I am concerned with how little this country knows about slavery, even leading historians," she told me. "I have been more concerned about the implications of how we treat the history of slavery, and whether or not our societies will address the legacies of slavery and racism, and much less concerned about the press."

In his opening remarks to the conference, the historian Prof Nicholas Guyatt acknowledged the negative coverage, saying: "We've had some media attention already and that's great, I welcome all views and am pleased everyone is here to listen to our fantastic speakers." Bell-Romero presented a paper on the profits of slavery at Oxbridge. Cadeau spoke about her research into South Sea Company annuities at Cambridge, saying that it was hard to find an older college in Cambridge that doesn't have links to this funding. No news story about the conference emerged – perhaps because in practice this was a fairly routine academic exercise. People presented papers on their niche areas of research, ran over time and debated.

On the final day of the conference, I sat with Bell-Romero in the lunch hall. He told me that he felt the launch of the Cambridge project had been handled better than the Caius report; the draft had gone to expert readers and the university backed the research it had commissioned. While the academics waited for the next talk to begin, Bell-Romero and a few other scholars working on slavery and reparations discussed the growing backlash to their work in an incredulous and frustrated tone. One British academic said he receives death threats every time he speaks about the case for reparations. After a few minutes of weary commiseration, they stood up from their empty plates and walked back into the lecture theatre.

"If you take pride in the past," a Latin American researcher said with quiet exasperation before leaving, "then you have to take responsibility, too." ●

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Roger Mills

Documentary-maker who helped to establish the template for celebrity television travel series

Mills, left, with Michael Palin in the Himalayas. The director admitted that he had made Palin suffer. 'There's not a Turkish bath or hammam that you haven't been slapped or walloped in,' he told the presenter

The documentary-maker Roger Mills, who has died aged 86 after suffering from Parkinson's disease, went with the actor Michael Palin on his globe-trotting adventures for almost 20 years and helped to establish the template for celebrity travel series. Palin called his director, an Oxford classicist, "the professor".

Viewers enjoyed the natural situations Palin found himself in, as he brought his humour, inquiring mind and sense of excitement to the places he experienced, as well as displaying the awkwardness of travellers confronted by new cultures.

It began with Around the World in 80 Days (1989), which recreated the route of the fictional explorer Phileas Fogg in Jules Verne's 19th-century novel of the same name. The idea came from Clem Vallance, who went on to produce the series, for which he and Mills directed different episodes.

Although Palin was Vallance's preferred choice as presenter from the start – having been impressed by a 1980 programme he made about a train journey from London to the Kyle of Lochalsh – Will Wyatt, the BBC's head of features and documentaries, proposed the seasoned Alan Whicker.

Mills had just spent months filming British expats in Australia for the 1988 Whicker's World series Living With Waltzing Matilda, but he and Vallance conspired to ensure Palin landed the job. At a lunch with Whicker, they decided to stress the discomforts and lack of five-star hotels, with Mills telling Whicker: "You will have to share deck space with the crew between Oman and Bombay (Mumbai)."

Mills recalled: "He wrote a letter the next day to the effect that he thought the pace of the show would be such that he wouldn't have time to prepare his interviews."

Palin was confirmed as the presenter and even consulted Whicker for some travel tips. As he circumnavigated the globe by land and sea via Venice, Athens, Egypt, Dubai, India, Hong Kong, China and the US, before sailing across the Atlantic back to Britain, he dubbed Mills, Vallance and the rest of the film crew Passepartout, after Fogg's French manservant.

In Mumbai, Palin struggled with what he recorded in his diary as "grinding poverty" and children begging, adding: "It's wearing us all down." Mills captured his response to such encounters.

Viewers and critics agreed on the wisdom of having Palin front a travel programme, and more followed – with Mills again directing. Two further series completed what became known as a trilogy: Pole to Pole (1992), from north to south pole via Scandinavia, Russia, Turkey, Greece, Cyprus and Africa, providing greater physical challenges, and Full Circle (1997), a complicated, anti-clockwise, 50,000-mile journey round the Pacific Rim that started in the Bering Strait between Alaska and Russia.

Mills also directed Palin's subsequent series, Sahara (2002), Himalaya (2004) and New Europe (2007), and was an executive producer of his 2012 Brazil adventure.

He admitted making Palin suffer. When they were both interviewed by the Independent in 2014, Mills told Palin: "There's not a Turkish bath or hammam that you haven't been slapped or walloped in – or any medicinal mud that you haven't been smeared with." But he never asked Palin to do anything he would not do himself.

Mills was also the editor of BBC Two's 40 Minutes strand for its first four years (1981-85), overseeing documentaries, encouraging young talent and winning Bafta's best factual series award twice.

He was born in Anerley, south-east London, to Aileen (nee Rowe), a radio actor and dramatist, and Henry Mills, a history teacher. He attended Portsmouth grammar school after his father became head of the city's Southern grammar school for boys. Following national service in the Intelligence Corps, then at GCHQ, he studied classics at Worcester College, Oxford (1956-59), taught Latin and Greek at Felsted school, Essex, and then moved to Eastbourne college.

"When it came to the navy and Radley college, he saw it as an achievement to gain access to 'closed' institutions

Mills joined BBC South in 1962 as a news reporter and later moved to BBC West. Nationally, he produced and directed documentaries such as The Mormon Invasion (1967), about missionaries of the American church recruiting members in Britain, and Expulsion (1971), about drug-taking in schools. In 1972, Mills became an executive producer of several groundbreaking fly-on-the wall series about institutions, including the Royal Navy in the award-winning Sailor (1976) and Radley college in Public School (1980).

He regarded it as an achievement to get access to what he had seen as "closed" institutions. He was also the first executive producer of the investigative-journalism series Inside Story, from 1974 to 1980.

As a director, Mills's other documentaries included Return to Saigon and Return to Peking (both 1988), with the reporter Anthony Grey, and The Clintons: A Marriage of Power (1998) on Channel 4, for whom he also produced the series New Model Army (2000), about the military's efforts to stamp out racism.

His contribution to factual television was recognised with Bafta's 1981 Desmond Davis award.

Mills's marriage to Kathleen Hayward in 1962 ended in divorce. In 1989 he married Susie Mansell, and she survives him, along with their daughter, Hannah, the daughter of his first marriage, Sophie, and a granddaughter, Frances.

Anthony Hayward

Roger Edwin Stuart Mills, producer and director, born 22 November 1936; died 5 May 2023

Birthdays

Hannah Bardell, SNP MP, 40; **Lady (Jill) Black of Derwent**, former justice of the supreme court, 69; **Pat Boone**, singer and actor, 89; **Martin Brundle**, broadcaster, 64; **Brian Cox**, actor, 77; **Marlon Devonish**, athlete, 47; **Jason Donovan**, singer and actor, 55; **Lord (Norman) Foster of Thames Bank**, architect, 88; **Justine Henin**, tennis player, 41; **Tom Holland**, actor, 27; **Prof Alan Horwich**, radiotherapist, 75; **Mike Joyce**, drummer, 60; **Heidi Klum**, model, 50; **David Lan**, former artistic director, the Young Vic, 71; **Paco Peña**, flamenco guitarist, 81; **Markus Persson**, co-creator, Minecraft, 44; **Robert Powell**, actor, 79; **Sir Jonathan Pryce**, actor, 76; **John Pullinger**, former National Statistician and chief executive, UK Statistics Authority, 64; **Tom Robinson**, singer and broadcaster, 73; **Gerald Scarfe**, cartoonist and illustrator, 87; **Nigel Short**, chess grandmaster, 58; **Sarah Teather**, former Lib Dem MP and minister, 49; **Ronnie Wood**, guitarist and artist, 76; **Lady (Lola) Young of Hornsey**, actor, writer and arts administrator, 72.

Announcements

Deaths

CROSSLEY, Jack. Died peacefully at home on 22 May 2023. Very much-loved husband of Kate, father of Gary, Andy and Dan, grandfather of Hannah, Amy, Jess, Lillie and Ruby and great-grandfather of Freddie and Arya. Distinguished news journalist on the Times, the Observer and most major newspapers. A celebration of his life will be held at The Baskerville, Lower Shiplake, RG9 3NY on Thursday 15 June at 2pm. Family flowers. Donations to Sue Ryder c/o Tomalin & Son, 38 Reading Road, Henley-on-Thames RG9 1AG or online at www.jack-crossley.muchloved.com.

In Memoriam

TILL, Barry, 1 June 1923 - 13 June 2013. Scholar and educator. He loved his family, friends and Cley.

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Letters

Established 1906

Country diary
Porlock, Somerset

English wildlife has very few dangers. Adders - our only poisonous snake - are scarce, shy and non-deadly to humans. European hornets (*Vespa crabro*) look and sound intimidating, but are rarely aggressive. Even the plentiful moon jellyfish (*Aurelia aurita*) that sometimes swarm beaches and harbours cannot sting.

Yet I am wary of one creature, especially in summer. Usually less than 1cm long, it is typically found in areas of rough grazing, woodland or moorland where there are rabbits and wild deer.

Exmoor provides a perfect habitat, and it is especially abundant here. In recent days, I have found many crawling through my dog's fur, or hanging like dark, berried drops around her nose and eyes. These are ticks: blood-sucking arachnids that feed on mammals, including people.

I have never known ticks to be so numerous as they have been in the last few weeks. It's not just my perception; scientists at Bristol University are getting reports of a sudden rise in numbers. They think that this year's cool, wet spring delayed tick emergence, and then the warm May caused a sudden flush of vegetation, providing ideal conditions for their survival.

After a walk in Horner Woods, I find seven on my dog's head, picked up while she was nosing herbage along the side of the path. These are castor bean ticks (*Ixodes ricinus*), bay-coloured with chestnut-brown, seed-shaped bodies and black legs. Hedgehog ticks (*Ixodes hexagonus*), the species found most often on cats, seem to be less common. Ticks find hosts by climbing plant stems and waiting, forelegs outstretched, sensing heat and movement. When an animal brushes past, the tick hooks on, seeking a spot to bury its hypostome, the barbed tube that anchors it in place and through which it sucks.

As with other parasitic lifeforms, feeding can transmit bacteria into the host's circulation. Some ticks carry *Borrelia burgdorferi* bacteria, which cause Lyme disease, a debilitating illness requiring treatment with antibiotics. And it's not only a countryside issue - the castor bean tick can be found in city parks across the UK.

Sara Hudston

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Blue plaques should be for unsung heroines too

In seeking more women for London's blue plaques, English Heritage is misunderstanding many women's heritage (Blue plaques would take '300 years to hit balance of sexes', 27 May). Way back in 1978 I wanted to study art. My father pointed out that there were no famous female artists. I used my degree dissertation to explore why.

We women were taught to take up little space, speak with quiet voices, clear away after ourselves and, above all, be modest. Our creativity and innovations were consequently small, easily packed away or disposed of. Our credit was shared, anonymous, gifted to, or stolen by others. In the rare case that a female artist or innovator emerged, there was always a self-effacing partner doing the childcare, cooking, organising and ego-stroking that individual success requires.

The achievements of the many men and women given blue plaques were only possible because of the devotion, services or servitude of others. We have come to like the idea of a hero and the exceptional leader. But it supports the idea that great achievements only result from solo actors or producers.

In balancing up the plaques, I would encourage English Heritage to rebalance our understanding of heritage with some plaques for those who cooperated and collaborated, those whose contribution, or life, was deemed unimportant or dispensable, and those who were resigned to anonymity. It is this heritage that paves the way for us to share the resources we have more equitably.
Erika Rushton
Liverpool

● Re English Heritage requesting more nominations for plaques to women, I know of three unsuccessful submissions to it of 20th-century women in Battersea - the Booker prize winner Penelope Fitzgerald, who will be commemorated with a Battersea Society plaque this year; Elsa Lanchester, the Hollywood actor; and Isabella Gilmore, whose brother William Morris is said to have remarked to her: "I preach socialism, you practice it."

A Wandsworth council green plaque to the Diederichs Duval family of suffrage campaigners will be unveiled on 9 June. We can't depend on English Heritage to commemorate unsung women.
Jeanne Rathbone
Battersea Society heritage committee

● It's not only in London that blue plaques overlook women. In Norwich, our 12 to one bias inspired Rosie's Plaques, a group of women driven to hang plaques celebrating significant but unrecognised women in the history of our fine city. Guerrilla-art blue plaques appeared unheralded around Norwich, raising awareness of the injustice and of what we were missing. One of the plaques reads: "Dedicated to the profane and opinionated women who gathered here." Long may they gather and all power to those redressing the injustice in history written by men.
Steve Morphew
Norwich

● In 2017, Peterborough Civic Society installed 20 plaques, none of which celebrated women. We were acutely aware of this shortcoming so, in 2020, installed further plaques, including four women (Edith Cavell, Marjorie Pollard, Daphne Jackson and Annie Sage). This is still not enough and we have asked the public to submit further suggestions. To date we have received nominations for four men and one building.
Toby Wood
Vice-chair, Peterborough Civic Society

NHS must be funded by taxes, not charity

The readers responding to your article on food banks ('Why should anyone be hungry?', 23 May) are right to highlight that charities are stepping in to fill the gaping holes in government provision (Letters, 27 May). Alarmingly, this also applies to the NHS. A letter for a routine appointment at our local hospital was accompanied by a leaflet saying: "We need your help to raise £201,000 to train the next generation of eye surgeons across Wessex."

Whatever next? Sponsor a scalpel? Buy a bedpan? These are core costs. The NHS has funding per capita significantly below comparable European countries. It needs more money from taxes, not charity.
Ray Kipling
Holt, Dorset

● Rachel Hall's report (Rumours of alarm over cost as release of NHS workforce strategy is delayed, 30 May) fills me with dismay. It appears that our present government thinks that the crises in banking and business can be solved by printing money (AKA quantitative easing), but that the impending catastrophes of hunger, climate change and the demographically driven deterioration of our health services are too difficult and expensive to resolve.
Dr Peter Baddeley
Painswick, Gloucestershire

Terminally ill patients need help with bills

I care for people with a terminal illness in their homes. Too often, their last moments are overshadowed by worries about bills. Patients shiver in bed, reluctant to turn on the heating. Keeping warm shouldn't be a luxury, especially for people who can deteriorate in the cold. The news about the energy price cap reduction (Report, 26 May) will make little difference to families affected by terminal illness. After such a diagnosis most people give up work and are saddled with bills that are thousands of pounds above average due to them needing more heating and medical devices.

Families should be enjoying the precious time left with loved ones. More support is needed to make sure that happens for everyone.
Michelle Jones
Marie Curie advanced nurse practitioner

How prisoners of war enriched our lives

Orkney is not unique in having a Catholic chapel built by prisoners of war (Letters, 27 May). In the village of Easton Grey in Wiltshire is a small industrial estate and agricultural yard that was once No 89 working camp. It held Italian prisoners of war who were trusted to leave the camp and work on the land.

They converted a hut into a church, which they decorated with beautiful wall paintings. You can still see these wonderful frescoes, with the land owner's permission. By the entrance of our local Catholic church is a plaque donated in 1981 by Franco Montanari that thanks the locals for treating the prisoners well.
Gordon Williams
Malmesbury, Wiltshire

● We had a prisoner of war camp near where I grew up in Surrey. The German prisoners were welcomed to our house and used to make toys out of wooden pallets for me and my sister. My parents even got them to babysit so they could go to the theatre. They started writing letters to my parents on the day they were repatriated, and the exchange between them went on for years. I still have all their letters.
Christine Hayes
Wokingham, Berkshire

Corrections and clarifications

● A review of the new Photography Centre at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, included an image from the Libido Uprising series which we captioned as being by Jo Spence (The history of an art form - and our world, 23 May, p20). Spence collaborated with Rosy Martin for this series.

● Usain Bolt's world record for the 100m is 9.58 seconds, not 9.76 seconds as we had it in Trivia corner (24 May, G2, p12).

Editorial complaints and corrections can be sent to guardian.readers@theguardian.com or The readers' editor, **Kings Place, 90 York Way, London N1 9GU.** You can also leave a voicemail on **020 3353 4736**

Sipping on a record measure of brandy

I bought a pint of lager and a brandy in a hostelry in London's King's Cross area last week for what I thought was a very reasonable £10.60. It was not until I received the brandy that I was dismayed. The liquid therein barely covered the bottom of the glass. Further inquiry revealed the dispensed measure as 10ml. Is this the smallest retail measure in the UK and do the licensing authorities condone such Scrooge-like measures?
John Garforth
Addingham, West Yorkshire

● It was good to see that a statue in memory of the peace campaigner Brian Haw is to be installed facing the big guns in the Imperial War Museum (Report, 27 May). Readers might like to know that another memorial to him exists in the form of a bench on Whitstable beach, the result of a campaign by my late friend Richard Stainton, a man who in his life and work also waged peace.
Graham Jameson
London

● "Special shipments of British goods such as signed Beano comics will be among the first to be sent under the new arrangements" (UK's post-Brexit trade deals with Australia and New Zealand kick in, theguardian.com, 31 May). I checked the date and it's not 1 April.
Marlies Branston
Bedford

● For prep school boarders like myself, grub during the war was somewhat spartan. However, limited rations and the narrow palette of the cook's culinary skills were offset by a nightly drink of Bovril and hot milk (Letters, 31 May). More than 80 years on, it's still a pleasure.
Alec Douet
Aylsham, Norfolk

Puzzles

Yesterday's solutions

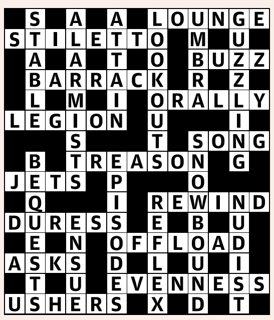
Killer sudoku
Easy

5	6	2	8	4	1	7	3	9
9	7	3	2	6	5	8	4	1
8	1	4	3	9	7	6	5	2
1	2	6	4	5	9	3	7	8
4	3	5	7	8	2	1	9	6
7	9	8	1	3	6	4	2	5
6	8	9	5	7	3	2	1	4
2	4	7	9	1	8	5	6	3
3	5	1	6	2	4	9	8	7

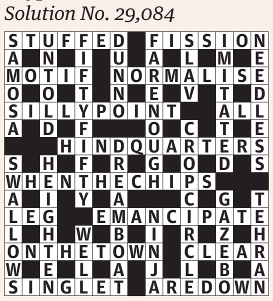
Medium

7	4	2	3	6	9	5	1	8
8	1	5	7	4	2	6	9	3
6	9	3	1	5	8	2	7	4
1	7	6	8	2	4	3	5	9
3	2	8	9	7	5	4	6	1
9	5	4	6	3	1	7	8	2
2	8	7	4	1	6	9	3	5
5	6	9	2	8	3	1	4	7
4	3	1	5	9	7	8	2	6

Codeword



Cryptic crossword
Solution No. 29,084

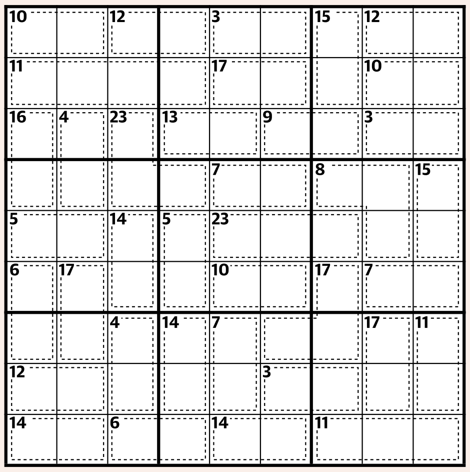


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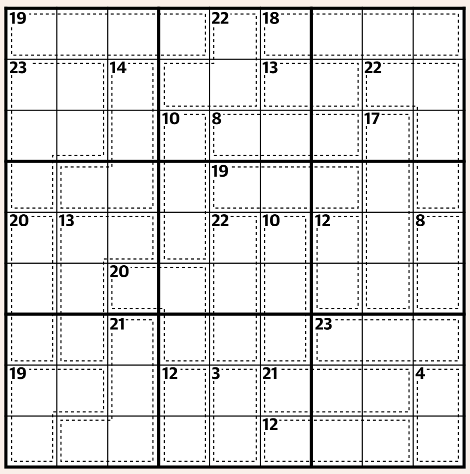
Killer sudoku

Easy

The normal rules of sudoku apply: fill each row, column and 3x3 box with all the numbers from 1 to 9. In addition, the digits in each inner shape (marked by dots) must add up to the number in the top corner of that box. No digit can be repeated within an inner shape.

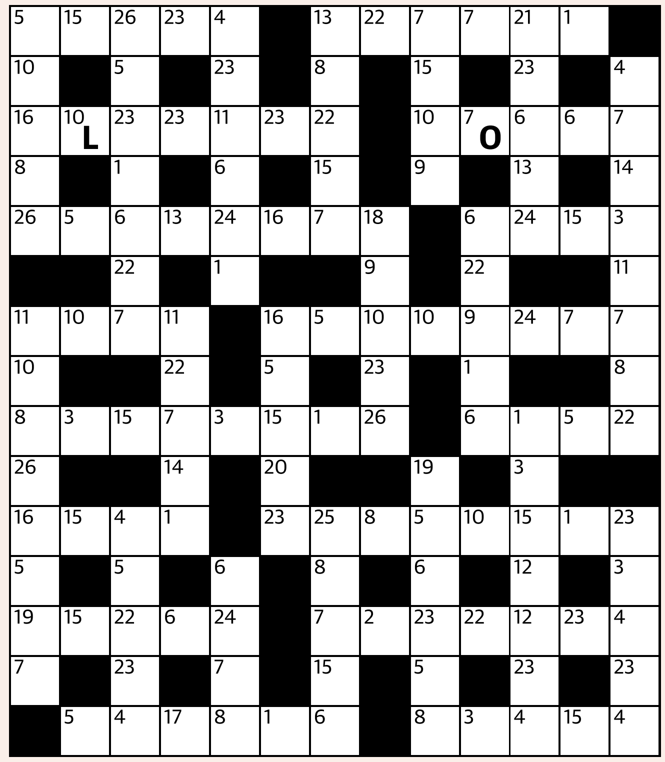


Medium



Codeword

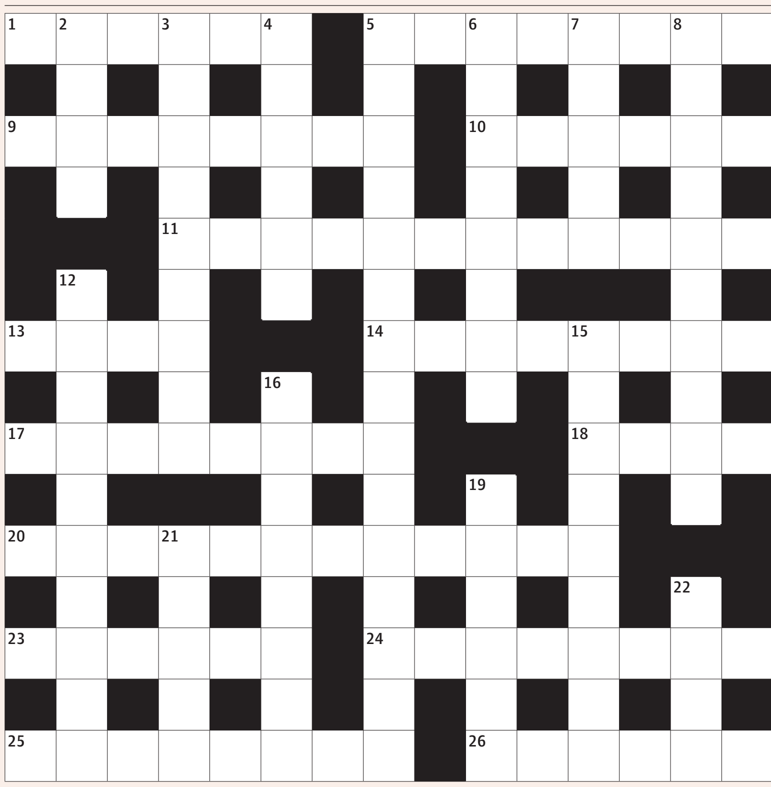
Each letter of the alphabet makes at least one appearance in the grid, and is represented by the same number wherever it appears. The letters decoded should help you to identify other letters and words in the grid.



A B C D E F G H I J K ~~L~~ M N ~~O~~ P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

1	2	3	4	5	6	7 O	8	9	10 L	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Guardian cryptic crossword No 29,085 set by Brummie



Across

1 With ormolu hem, expensive coat need not be thrown away (6)
5 Spike, having mangled cigar: 'Grand to go uncivilised!' (8)
9 End career (very little in it) (5-3)
10 Inferior but did farrier work daily, no trouble (6)
11 Film technology from one involved with Iron Man cast (12)
13 Shots, say, of parent going round topless (4)
14 Hot and stuffy – infuriated (8)
17 Algiers revolves round harem? (8)
18 One has to pursue female figure (4)
20 Swindle associated with pieces of furniture? Rubbish! (12)
23 Take a lot of time to become affiliated (6)
24 Prompt move to Vietnam, avoiding north (8)
25 Speed up undoing of nepotist (4,2,2)
26 Royal house about to return delivery (6)

Down

2 James catches large fish (4)
3 Dance supremo by a rising river (5,4)
4 Overhear organ piece that goes to the head (6)
5 Understudy (being separated) to offer a bribe? Despicable! (7,8)
6 Control keeps regressive creative activity in check (8)
7 Upturned bar in an array (5)
8 Hesitant when cutting round tops of diseased elms (10)
12 Block one's put on a classical architectural feature (10)
15 Files possibly state: 'Mae West' (9)
16 Woody surrounding for work unit that produces a reaction? (8)
19 Son, mean and empty-headed (6)
21 Decline fleshy fruit vociferously (5)
22 Manner lacks latitude, causing a spot of discomfort (4)

The Guardian



The view from behind the tills

What is really happening in shoplifting Britain

G2

Thursday 01/06/23

Life & Arts

Adrian Chiles

Why I long to laugh like a baby again

page 3



Cat body language

Your pet's secret signals

page 4



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Adrian Chiles



I'd love to laugh like a baby again, but I'll have to do with a big sneeze

A cute video of a baby laughing its head off has been doing the rounds on Twitter this week. He is sitting in a cardboard box as it's dragged along by the family dog. The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (Rospa) may frown at such a caper, but their concerns wouldn't bother this bairn, for the lad's quite helpless with mirth. Naturally, his joy is infectious.

When I was not much older than a baby, I was obsessed with Led Zeppelin. In the live recording of Stairway to Heaven at Madison Square Garden in 1973, Robert Plant follows up the lyric about forests echoing with laughter with a question for the crowd: "Does anyone remember laughter?" he inquires plaintively. Even as a devotee of his work, I remember thinking this plea a bit on the dismal side. But now, looking at the delight of the baby in the box, I find myself asking a similar question: does anyone remember laughing like that? You know, laughing and fearing you may never stop laughing, laughing so hard it hurts, laughing so uncontrollably that you're crying, actually crying. It does still happen, of course, but less often. Or perhaps that's just me.



'Once they start, they can't stop'… a baby's laughter is infectious

Most of us whose children were born in the video age have footage, somewhere, similar to that of the baby in the box. Perhaps this kind of uncontrolled, hysterical laughter is the sort of laughter with which we're born. The only one we know. After all, when was the last time you saw a baby deliver a wry chuckle or a single loud guffaw? No, once they start, they can't stop. I suppose it happens less and less because learning to control your emotions is part of growing up. If we didn't, we'd all be walking around either bawling our eyes out or crying with laughter.

It is interesting that "hysterical" is the adjective often used to describe this kind of laughter. In my dictionary, hysteria is defined as "a psychoneurosis in which repressed complexes become split off or dissociated from the personality, forming independent units, partially or completely unrecognised by consciousness". And so it goes on, in ever more impenetrable language. With this in mind, I look again at the baby in the box and, for the life of me, can't pick up any sense of repressed complexes coming to the surface. What I can identify is an element of fear, of uncertainty, which is quite understandable given that the lad's being dragged around by an excitable animal twice his size. Perhaps hysterical laughter arises out of fear and uncertainty and it's this we lose as we get older. Or perhaps not. I for one have plenty of fear and uncertainty to be going on with.

So how do I get to experience more often the magic felt by the baby in the box? I suppose drugs might do the trick. I had a friend in Birmingham who used to take magic mushrooms for this very reason. "Oh, mate," he'd tell me, "you've never known laughter like it." His surest route to untrammelled mirth was to drink mushroom tea while watching Family Fortunes on the box. He begged me to join him, but I chickened out.

Don't get me wrong, I laugh all the time, but not helplessly, like the baby in the box. What I miss most is the aftermath, when the joyous fit has passed and you're left tear-stained and exhausted, deliciously spent. As a middle-aged bloke, the only regular comparable experience might be sneezing. You know a big one's coming and you know there's nothing you can do about it. There's the moment of uncertainty when you wonder if you'll even survive its magnitude. Though slightly afraid, you will it on. And, bang, it happens. Oh, the release. You're left relieved but wrung out. But it's no substitute; it's nice, but no laughing matter.

Let me tell you about my dad's secret supply of asparagus

When modern and ancient collide, you expect a discordant note to be struck. But, on Sunday, I went to a place where the ages were in harmony. For many a spring, during the all-too-short asparagus season, my dad has disappeared into the Worcestershire countryside and returned bearing bunches of the finest spears. For a man who hardly ever does any shopping, this is odd. "I have a supplier," he'll say, offering no further explanation.

I had long wanted to get to the bottom of this mysterious business, but then the season would finish and I would forget about it. Not this year. Almost grudgingly, he showed me his source: a drive-thru asparagus store. How John Constable would paint this rural scene, or Thomas Hardy describe it, or Edward Elgar set it to music, I can't imagine. But I was enchanted.

As we pulled up, a woman appeared, as if by magic, brandishing bunches of asparagus the size of Churchill's cigars. I wound down the window, gave her the money, and the gear was handed over.

My dad's dealer is called Carol. I won't reveal this drive-thru's exact location, lest the shelves are cleared in the last few weeks of the season, disappointing her regulars. But if you keep your eyes peeled between Mustow Green and Hackman's Gate on the A450, you may well find it. She produces all sorts of stuff on her 400 acres but, apart from pumpkins in the autumn, asparagus is her only business-to-consumer operation. I do like a specialist retailer, a welcome release from the customary paralysis of choice. I told her she could get away with charging more than three quid a bunch. Interestingly, she said the fact she sold nothing else held her back from charging more, as any price rise would stick out like, well, one of her bigger spears. I trust the Harvard Business School knows of this strange pricing phenomenon.

The deal done, off we went with our green wands, grown in Worcestershire from time immemorial.



Pass notes



№ 4,566

Rick Astley's pyjamas

Age: Unknown.

Appearance: Grey with white piping and a rounded, notch-lapel collar.

How do you know what kind of pyjamas Rick Astley wears? Are you some kind of weird superfan? In answer to your second question: yes. And in answer to your first: he wore them on national television.

He wore his pyjamas on TV? When? On BBC Breakfast on Wednesday, to publicise his upcoming appearance at Glastonbury.

Why was he in his jim-jams? Because it was 7.50am. What were you wearing at that hour?

A severely distressed nun's habit – sorry, long story – but I wasn't live on the BBC. Couldn't he have put on some clothes? Why should he? He's Rick Astley, a 57-year-old pop legend, comfortable in his own skin, appearing remotely from his home, and in possession of some very nice pyjamas.

So it wasn't a mistake? Of course not. Astley can do no wrong.

Were his sartorial choices remarked upon? Astley raised the subject himself, suggesting he might even grace the Pyramid stage in his pyjamas, if they put him on early enough.

Or late enough. Good point.

Who else is playing Glastonbury in their pyjamas this year? Elton John, the Arctic Monkeys and Guns N' Roses are on the list, but their wardrobe plans have not been revealed.

Does this sort of thing have any precedent? No. Astley has never even been to Glastonbury.

I meant the pyjamas-on-TV thing. Oh yes. During the first lockdown of 2020, Martin Clunes appeared on Good Morning Britain in his jammies.

This is 2023 and lockdown is now a distant memory. Nevertheless, the habit persists. The comedian Lucy Porter wore her pyjamas on BBC Breakfast in February. It's only recently, however, that wearing pyjamas in the daytime has actually become cool.

Astley has made pyjamas cool? Not on his own, no. But Manchester City's Erling Haaland, top scorer this season and style icon, is happy to sport a pair of £2K D&G silk pyjamas out of sleeping hours.

I guess if I'd spent that kind of money on pyjamas, I'd want lots of people to see me in them. That's what Instagram is for.

So is it now OK for someone like me to wear pyjamas in a work video meeting? Should I try to get that written warning rescinded? Check with HR.

Do say: "This elegant, brushed cotton sleepwear isn't just comfortable, but also stylish enough to be worn at work, on TV, or anywhere!"

Don't say: "Except the bus. Driver's discretion, apparently."

COVER: CHRISTOPHER THOMOND/THE GUARDIAN

13 secret signals all cat owners

Shortly after my partner and I adopted our two cats, our fluffy black one, Mambo, decided that I am his special human. Mambo rarely lets anyone else pet him, but he follows me everywhere, trilling to greet me, rubbing his cheek on my hand, sitting on my stuff or watching me work. He also loves it when I bring out his puzzle toys and treats for games. I did not expect to get this much attention from a cat, so I joked with friends that Mambo was behaving like a dog. But, when my cat behaviourist friend told me: "No, he is behaving like a CAT!" I decided to find out more.

As a new cat owner, I started questioning the popular belief that cats are less sociable than dogs. It seems that for every meme about dogs being our best friends, there is one about cats being aloof, weird or murderous.

But, while it's true that cats are solitary predators, the latest scientific evidence confirms what many of us already know from experience: cats are socially flexible creatures who become attached to their humans (like kittens to their mothers) and have their own ways of expressing affection, trust or their need for "alone time".

Our feline pets signal their moods and feelings with every part of their body: their face, eyes, ears, whiskers and tail; their changing postures; and the direction and speed of their movements. But you need to look at more than any single body part or pose to really know what a cat is saying. If a cat with an arched back and bristly tail is retreating and hissing, it's probably terrified. On the other hand, if they're bouncing and skipping sideways, they might be feeling playful.

Learning to recognise cat body language is about observing movements in context and understanding the connection between behaviour and the bigger picture.

Writing and illustrating my book, Kitty Language: An Illustrated Guide to Understanding Your Cat, has opened my eyes to the ways my cats talk to each other and to me, and it has given me a new appreciation for the sensitive, intelligent and expressive animals they - and all cats - are.

Lili Chin

Relaxed and content

A relaxed cat's body looks soft and flexible and moves languidly. (Tip: a cat with its paw pads not touching the ground is more relaxed than a cat whose paw pads are touching the ground.)

Visual signs
No tension in the face and body
Fluid movements; not twitchy or jerky
Weight is balanced

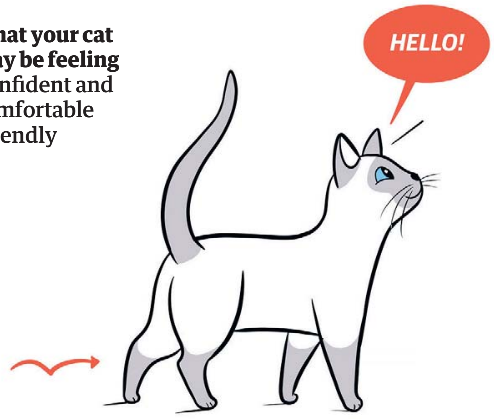
What your cat may be feeling
Relaxed, content
"All is well"
"Just hanging out!"



Moving confidently

Visual signs
Direct approach
Head position at shoulder height or higher
Ears forward
Tail is high and softly curled

What your cat may be feeling
Confident and comfortable
Friendly

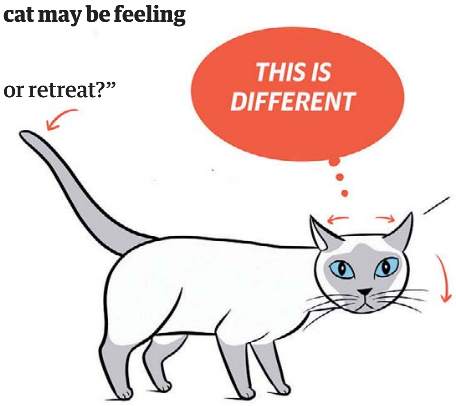


Unsure

Cats can express uncertainty in both a standing or a seated posture.

Visual signs
Stops moving
Head is below shoulder height
Slightly crouching, limbs tucked in

What your cat may be feeling
Unsure
Cautious
"Approach or retreat?"



Anxious

Visual signs
Crouching close to the ground, keeping a distance
Tail is low or tucked down

What your cat may be feeling
Scared
Unsafe
Predicting danger or discomfort



Very scared

The more frightened a cat is feeling, the smaller or flatter it will make itself.

Visual signs
Crouching, tucked-in head and limbs
All four paws are flat on the ground
Pupils are dilated

What your cat may be feeling
Terrified
"Don't look at me"
"Leave me alone!"



Fixated, stalking

Visual signs
Body is low to the ground, neck stretches forward
Focused stare, pupils may change size
Waits and watches, or creeps forward slowly

What your cat may be feeling
Very focused
Calculating distances
"I'm gonna get you!"



Spraying (urine marking)

May look like peeing, but it expresses different needs.

Visual signs
Tail is high and sometimes quivering
Spraying urine on a vertical surface or an object higher than ground level

What your cat may be feeling
Stress, uncertainty
The need to reorient and confirm where they are
"There are weird changes in my home!"
"I need to make this place feel like home"
If unneutered, attracting mates through scent messages



need to know



Whiskers spread forward

Visual signs
Whiskers are spread out and away from the face (while focusing on something)
Mouth may appear puffed out

What your cat may be feeling
Excited
Curious
Measuring the distance to nearby prey or an object



Whiskers spread backward

A cat may also pull back their whiskers for protection, when something is too close, and to avoid them being touched.

Visual signs
Whiskers are pressed back flat against the face, may look bunched together

What your cat may be feeling
Anxious
Overwhelmed
"Don't touch my whiskers"

Flattened ears

Also described as folded-down ears, lowered ears, invisible ears, or, if the tips are pointed to the side or back like wings, aeroplane ears.

Visual signs
Ears appear flat, openings aren't visible
Ear tips point down or back

What your cat may be feeling
Scared
Anxious

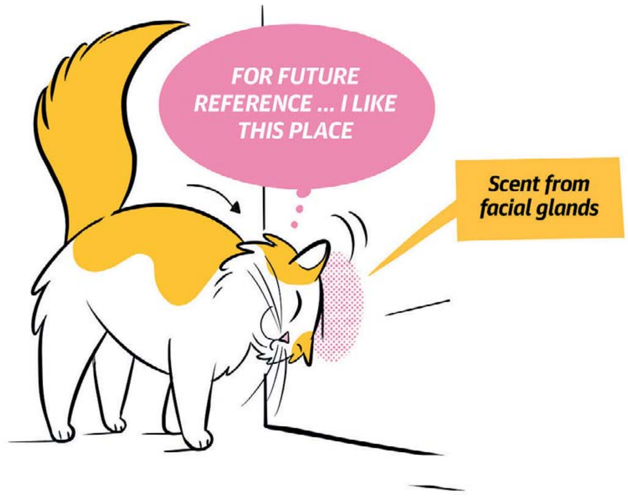


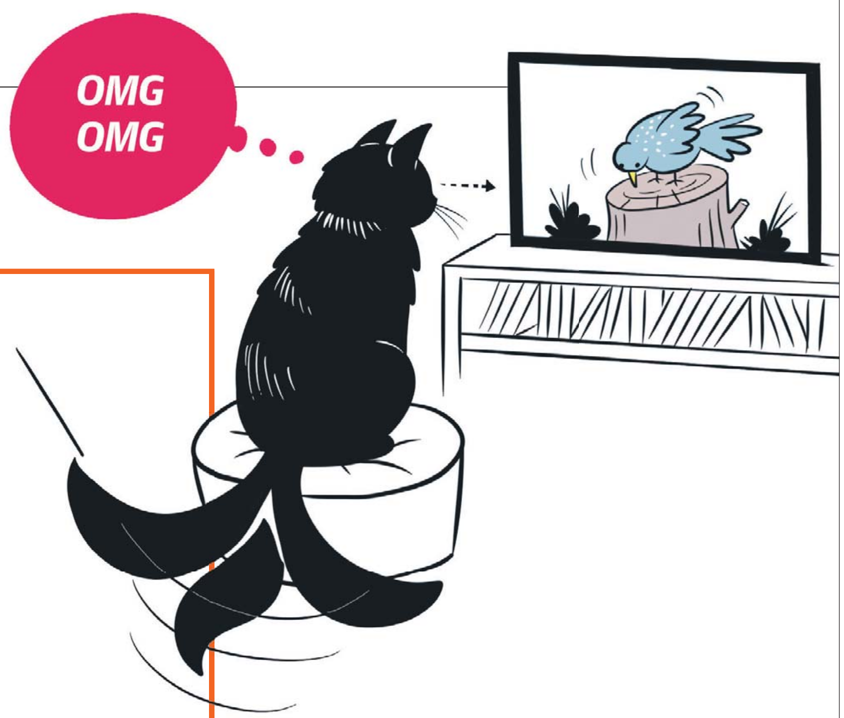
Rubbing and clawing

Behaviour that cats use to transfer chemical signals from their facial glands and toe glands.

Visual signs
Rubbing their face and body against walls, furniture, and so on
Using claws to knead or scratch

What your cat may be feeling
Happy that objects and places smell familiar and reassuring
"I've been here" or "I live here"
Refreshing time stamps and signposts of places they have visited (the strength of a scent fades over time)
Sharing scent messages with other cats





Lashing tail

Big tail movements could signal excitement, irritation, or overstimulation, depending on the context.

Visual signs
Tail is swinging or lashing – a big wagging, slapping or thumping motion

What your cat may be feeling
Overwhelmed
Frustrated
"This is too much!"
"I can't relax"



Quivering tail

Seen when your cat is greeting someone (not to be confused with the quivering tail that happens before spraying).

Visual signs
Tail is vertical and vibrating from the base (not flicking)

What your cat may be feeling
Happy
Giddy
Super excited or really wants something

This is an extract from Kitty Language: An Illustrated Guide to Understanding Your Cat by Lili Chin (Penguin, £12.99), published on 13 June.





Lena Rowe at her till; (right) an alleged thief is called out in the window of Claire Liu's DIY shop

'One guy uses the shop like a larder'

Shop thefts in Britain have more than doubled in the past six years. **Helen Pidd** spent a day with shopkeepers in a leafy suburb of Manchester to find out why

Chorlton is one of Manchester's most aspirational suburbs. Its handsome red-brick semis regularly sell for £700,000 or more. It has a worker-owned, vegetarian cooperative that sells locally grown fruit and vegetables, several reiki studios and an artisanal off-licence where one of the bestselling lagers - locally brewed, of course - costs £4 a can.

But Chorlton has a less wholesome side that is best illustrated by its branch of Boots. Want some makeup? You will have to ask for it. Every lipstick, eyeliner, mascara, blusher - everything - is kept in the stockroom, out of public sight and reach. Why? "It keeps getting stolen," shrugs a shop assistant. "We've not had it out for months now." The thieves had learned when deliveries arrived and would clear them out within minutes.

This small corner of Manchester is no anomaly. The British Retail Consortium (BRC) estimates that there were 8m "theft incidents" in British shops last year, costing £953m. The BRC says shop theft is a "long-term rising trend", with incidents more than doubling since 2016-17. Meanwhile, reports abound of increasing desperation among customers stealing to feed their children - claims promoted by opposition politicians, but strongly contested by many retailers.

To investigate the scale of the problem, I take a stroll down Chorlton's main thoroughfare, Barlow Moor Road. The stories I hear en route may seem surprising for a suburb with a knit-your-own-yoghurt reputation: the vintner who keeps a baseball bat behind the counter; the stolen joints of meat hawked around the breakfast tables at the local chain pub; the mini-mart manager who says the police don't want to deal with the man who lives opposite and comes in every day to steal breakfast, lunch and dinner.

I start at the southern end, near the graveyard that inspired Morrissey to write the lyrics to Cemetry Gates. Sitting behind protective screens at Progress convenience store, Lena Rowe is immediately keen to talk. She hands over an A4 sheet of paper she has laminated overnight. It is a printout from her CCTV cameras, purportedly showing two teenage boys stealing drinks after she refused to sell them vapes. She plans to put it up in the window, "just so they know that I know". She hasn't decided yet whether to ring the police: "Do you think I should?"

Further down the road, Claire Liu, who runs a DIY and household store, has also been busy with her laminator. "THIEVES," reads the sign in her window, above a photograph of a man with glasses and gelled hair and the message: "How pathetic to steal a pod of fish food worth £1.49. I hope your fishes are all doing well." Liu does report thieves to the police, but complains that only the most prolific seem to face justice. She is still smarting from an incident last year when a woman came in and stole a box of vapes worth £70 - "a whole day's wage for me or my partner".

Shoplifting offences recorded by UK police have remained more or less static over the past decade, at about 300,000 each year. The gulf between those numbers and the 8m incidents logged by retailers suggests not even 4% of shoplifting crimes are reported to the police. Prosecutions are plummeting. In the year to June 2022, 21,279 people were prosecuted in England and Wales for shoplifting, down from 80,352 a decade earlier.

"There remains a perception among some retailers that some police forces do not regard shop theft as a 'real' crime, particularly if it is under £200 in value (often perceived as the lower limit before action is taken)," says the BRC's 2023 crime survey. "A perception that nothing will happen is



probably held not just among retail staff but among repeat offenders, who are a significant proportion of the total, and who are willing to take the risk. There is a strong belief among some of them – supported by ad hoc reports – that even if they appear in court multiple times, the sentence will be so light it will hardly make a difference."

Should any of Chorlton's shopkeepers pop into Manchester magistrates court, they are unlikely to emerge in an optimistic frame of mind. I sit in the district judge Bernard Begley's court for a day as he rattles through dozens of cases, from cannabis cultivation to voyeurism with plenty of shoplifting in between.

There is a weariness to him as he sees who has been led into the dock of court 16 just after lunch. The bearded man behind the bulletproof glass appears ragged in his prison-issue grey tracksuit, as if he has just woken up.

Stephen, the 32-year-old defendant, is back in court because the night before he had gone to the Shell filling station on Barlow Moor Road and stolen six packets of bacon. A clerk reads out the charge, which includes the value of the goods: £18.54. Stephen pleads guilty and then the prosecutor explains that Stephen was "trapped" in the garage by a police community support officer. He tried to avoid arrest by pleading: "Can you just let me go? It's only bacon."

Stephen's lawyer stands up and confirms the judge's suspicions: his client was in Begley's court only the previous week on charges of stealing food from Aldi. He is banned from all branches of Aldi and Iceland nationwide. As he is awaiting sentencing for other offences, Begley lets him out on bail so the crimes can be dealt with together: "But if you come across me again before then, there's only one place for you – understand?" Stephen seems delighted. "Is that it? Oh, top! See you in a bit!" he shouts from behind the glass as he is led off by the dock officers.

The next defendant, Lisa, is also no stranger to the court, with 24 convictions, including one for not taking her child to school for almost a year. She is 43, but, like all the shoplifters in court, looks much older, diminished after decades of addiction – alcohol, in her case. Accused of stealing washing powder and chocolate from Morrisons, she had been arrested and kept in the cells overnight after missing her first court date.

Her tale is typically miserable. She steals not just to buy booze, but also to clear her "considerable debts", her solicitor tells the court, racked up partly as a result of having to pay the bedroom tax on her council flat. She was recently evicted and is now sofa surfing with a friend. Begley decides to give her one more chance, releasing her on the condition that she doesn't darken the door of any Morrisons in the country.

Then there is Anthony, who pleads guilty to stealing £128-worth of makeup from House of Fraser. "I'm homeless!" he apparently told the security guards. "What else do you expect me to do?" After him comes Wayne, 40, also of no fixed abode, who says he stole £110 of angling equipment from Decathlon to sell to feed himself.

There have been many media reports of "ordinary" people stealing because of the cost of living crisis. This idea is rejected by many retail experts. The Association of Convenience Stores (ACS), the voice of more than 33,500 shops, regularly surveys its members and thinks shoplifting rates are at their highest since they began collecting data in 2012. But, contrary to many media reports, the rise is not due to people stealing "because they are desperate for food to feed their families", says Chris Noice, ACS's head of communications.

He highlights a story about baby formula kept behind tills at some branches of Co-op to stop them being stolen, which was seized upon by various campaign groups as evidence that the cost of living crisis was forcing parents to steal to nourish their babies. "Baby formula is targeted because it's a high-value item, along with coffee, meat, cheese and alcohol," says Noice. "It's stolen to sell on, whether that's in pubs or on Facebook. Typically, people are stealing to fund their drug or alcohol habits, and organised crime groups are often involved, too."

"We put out a delivery, turn our backs and literally the whole chiller has been emptied

Back in Chorlton, the manager of Quality Save, a low-price convenience store next to Boots, is fighting a losing battle against an ever-more-brazen band of shoplifters. "They're in and out all day, every day, and it's definitely got worse since Covid," says the manager with a sigh, her eyes darting down the aisles. The day before, she caught four – an average tally.

She divides shoplifters into three categories. Most problematic are the "prolific thieves" – the regulars who waltz in and out taking the highest-value items to sell on to fund their drug or alcohol habits. "We know their names. They are all banned, but they don't care," she says. They go for laundry capsules, coffee, protein powder, booze, meat; anything they can fence quickly and lucratively. Expensive but light is the ideal steal.

Then there are the "compulsive shoplifters". One was caught the previous day with a random collection of loot in her bag, including a gold-plated figurine of Rodney from Only Fools and Horses (£8.99). "She was incredibly upset – she didn't even know why she had taken it," says the manager. "I can imagine her living in a house piled high with stuff. A hoarder."

The saddest group, the newest cohort, are the "regular" shoppers who simply can't afford everything they need: "They're the ones who only put half their goods in their basket and hide the rest in their coats or bags." They are mortified to be caught, telling staff they can't make ends meet. The manager insists their number is rising, contrary to the views of the retail experts. She recalls an "older gentleman" who was rumbled the week before for stealing coffee. "But not a big jar, like the drug addicts take. It was the very smallest jar – clearly for himself."

She points at the shelf. Her middle finger has an odd bend in it, a wound from a tussle with another shoplifter. Not too long ago, another staff member was knocked unconscious. Next month, a 33-year-old woman is going on trial for assaulting two people after being caught allegedly stealing toiletries. "We've had staff leave because they can't cope with the aggression," says the manager, who has worked at the store for 19 years.

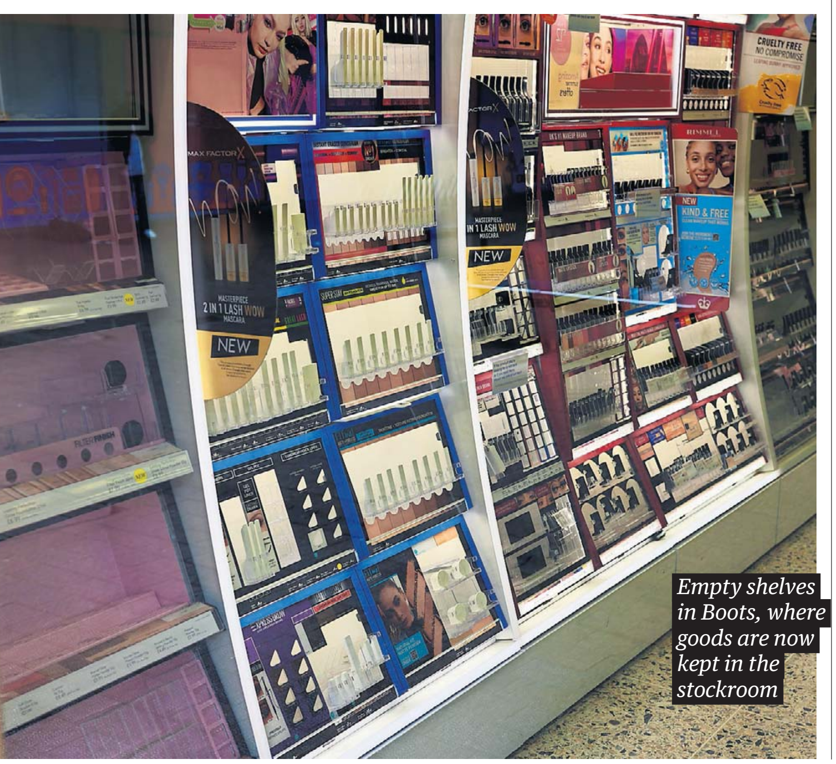
All of the employees to whom I speak, who work for chains in Chorlton, say they are instructed not to chase after shoplifters and certainly not to intervene physically. At the Shell garage, one worker says they could theoretically lock someone in the shop, but that carries its own dangers. The bigger stores rely on CCTV to catch thieves retrospectively, handing footage to the police if and when they have time, in the hope it will help officers identify serial offenders.

At a branch of one of the major supermarkets on Barlow Moor Road, workers seem at the end of their tether. They have resorted to starting a WhatsApp group to share intelligence with other traders. Shoplifting is constant and blatant, complains one. "See that flat over there?" he says, pointing across the road. "There's a guy in there who comes in here literally every day and just treats the shop like his own personal larder, pinching whatever he fancies for every single meal. Police don't want to know."

His colleague recalls going into a nearby pub for a mid-morning breakfast, only to be offered joints of meat – stolen from his own store that morning – from a succession of people going from table to table. Meat is a big target for supermarket thieves. "There's been times when we put out a delivery, turn our backs and literally the whole chiller has been emptied," he says. There were reports this week that some Marks & Spencer food stores are now displaying a single steak at a time. Despite most shops telling me that they have noticed a rise in shoplifting in Chorlton, Greater Manchester police says reported incidents are down. In the first five months of 2023, the force recorded 73 shoplifting offences in Chorlton, compared with 101 in the same period last year.

"Shoplifting remains a priority across our district," says Sgt Jade Wells, from the Chorlton neighbourhood policing team. "In the past three months, 10 prolific offenders have been arrested – three of these have received custodial sentences and will be subject to criminal behaviour orders upon release, and one is awaiting sentence."

Among the tactics she says they use to tackle the problem, she lists visible patrols and plainclothes observation. "We work with shopkeepers not only to identify offenders, but also to offer support and advice. The traders also have a direct line of communication with the Chorlton neighbourhood policing team and we will continue to work hard on their behalf." When the lipsticks are back out at Boots, you will know they have cracked it.


Empty shelves in Boots, where goods are now kept in the stockroom

PHOTOGRAPHS: CHRISTOPHER THOMOND/THE GUARDIAN



'Esther, the singing dog won't sing!'

It mixed performing pets and suggestive parsnips with bold exposés – and hooked 20m viewers. Fifty years after That's Life! launched, Esther Rantzen and her team relive the many highs with **Mark Lawson**



Real life ... left, filming in 1976; below, Rantzen with her team hiding their identities in 1978

A young BBC trainee was sent, in the late 1970s, to film an Edinburgh dog that was reputed to sing along to his master's bagpipes. "But," he recalls, "the film crew set up, the guy in a kilt started playing, and the dog didn't sing at all. It just sat there."

The fledgling director was Adam Curtis, who recently won his fourth Bafta, for Russia 1985-99: TraumaZone. Back then, he was a junior in the Talented Pets section of That's Life!, a BBC One series run by Esther Rantzen, a noted perfectionist in control of a show that was first broadcast 50 years ago this spring and had 15-20m viewers.

Curtis worried the silent canine meant the end of his career. "I rang Esther and said, 'He's not singing!' And Esther said, 'Darling' – always in that theatrical way – 'Darling, that's brilliant! Just keep filming!' So I took various shots of a dog sitting silently next to a man playing the bagpipes incredibly loudly in his front room. I took the footage back and Esther turned it into a three-minute film of a dog doing nothing while this guy piped away with increasing desperation. And it was incredibly funny."

In between amusing animals, though, Curtis could find himself working on "stories about housing estates collapsing because councils had taken bribes to build on brownfield sites". This mix of reporting and chortling was central from the start. "I had been brought up to believe," says Rantzen, "that mixing comedy and tragedy was a great British tradition. Hence the Porter scene in Macbeth. Taxi drivers used to ask, 'Is your show meant to be funny or serious?' And I said, 'Yes.'" (The 82-year-old revealed in March she had cancer "which has spread", but generously answered my questions.)

When That's Life! premiered, at 10.25pm on Saturday 26 May (the show later became a Sunday fixture), the Radio Times teased: "When the Council won't budge, when the Ministry won't reply, when the Managing Director snubs you, do you say, 'That's life' and give up? Or do you turn to this: a late-night collection of the jokes, dramas and problems that happen in real life?"

William Nicholson – now an Oscar-nominated screenwriter, for Gladiator and Shadowlands –



Skincare spoof ... an April Fool bulletin

was a trainee on the first series, responsible for Heap of the Week. "Consumers would write in about a product that had let them down but they were not getting any response from the manufacturer," he says. "So they got to destroy it in a satisfying way. A woman sent in boots that the heels had come off. We took her to a fairground and a wrestler ripped them to pieces while she and her family leapt up and down in delight."

Curtis was also the researcher on the show's most celebrated pet item: a dog that allegedly said "Sausages!" This had a global spin-off: "After the dog who said 'Sausages', someone wrote in about a dog in Australia who could say 'Scissors' and 'Mother', and they did a satellite link-up where the dogs had a conversation." Curtis adds: "Esther was amazingly good at knowing how to get laughs."

And tears. One "Dear Esther" letter was about a fraudulent equity release scheme. The handwriting changed halfway through – a daughter was continuing a plea for help started by her father who had killed himself in despair at being conned.

Between the canines and blown-up toasters, the programme campaigned for organ transplants, better seatbelts, softer surfaces in

PHOTOGRAPHS: GETTY IMAGES/TRINITY MIRROR/MIRRORPIX/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

playgrounds - and exposed sexual abuse at a school, which led to the charity Childline.

"Our clout came from the size of our audience," says Rantzen, "which meant that decision-makers, even prime ministers, knew we were watched by the people they answered to."

Bryher Scudamore, who worked on the show for 14 years, eventually as editor, keeps the That's Life! archive in her London home. Each week's credits were drawn to order: the artist Rod Jordan "got sent the script on a Saturday morning. Every picture was hand-drawn and all the credits done in Letraset, to the precise length of the exit music. If we lost an item - for legal reasons, say - he had to stick a new section over. Then it was unwound on rollers in front of the camera."

The most extreme content shift in the series was from phallic-shaped vegetables held up with a snigger to graphic stories of sexually abused children. "Sadly for Esther," says Scudamore, "people keep going on about the rude vegetables, which were a small part of the show."

"As an ardent Remainer," says Rantzen, "my only gripe against the EU was their ban on wonky parsnips."

That's Life!'s most YouTubed item dates from 1988, however, but involved lives saved decades earlier. Rantzen placed on the desk of junior researcher Katinka Blackford Newman, now an Emmy-nominated documentary-maker, a photograph album found by the wife of a Berkshire stockbroker in their attic. It showed that her husband, Nicholas Winton, had organised trains rescuing 669 children at risk from Nazi genocide, finding them British foster families. Blackford Newman explains: "Esther said, 'I know this isn't really a That's Life! sort of story but it could be really amazing if we could track down some children."

Winton had never publicised his mission because a final attempted rescue train had been thwarted, in his view cancelling out the salvations. So his wife used a pretext to get him to the recording where he discovered he was sitting between two of his refugees.

"It was electrifying in the studio," says Blackford Newman. "We appealed for others who had been rescued and the phones just kept ringing." The following Sunday, Rantzen asked any children of the Czech Kindertransport in the audience to rise. Winton slowly turned to see a standing ovation. "It was overwhelming," says Scudamore. "Not only the survivors but the sense of all their children and their grandchildren that would otherwise not be alive.

> **A woman sent in boots that the heels had come off. We got a wrestler to rip them to pieces**

"Esther was just a very good journalist. She didn't throw things, she didn't shout at people."

She was certainly direct. James Hawes, a former researcher, recalls: "I put forward a film idea once and Esther held the room pin-drop quiet and said, 'James, darling, you're not a director and never will be.' I've carried that ever since."

Curtis's view is that "she was a ruthless TV executive who had to get a programme out every week. I found the men in the BBC more insidious."

Nicholson feels she was also a victim of her pioneering career: "This was a world where every male producer had a female PA, who he was probably having an affair with. Apart from that, women were there to make coffee and arrange meetings. And when Esther rose to power, there was a lot of ill-feeling, which was almost certainly sexism. Certainly she was tough and direct. But I've known many male producers who were absolutely brutal and didn't get the stick Esther got."

Rantzen says: "I was always conscious of the fact that if I failed, it would make it even harder for other women in the industry to be given opportunities they deserved. So I tried to be first to arrive in the office and last to leave."

A particular aspect of her femininity became a complicating factor; she had been the protege, next lover, then wife of Desmond Wilcox, her head of department. Nicholson says: "I was aware that there was a lot of ill-feeling about Esther and Wilcox. The feeling was, that was why she was where she was. But I completely reject that. Whether you liked Esther or didn't, she was extremely good and was there on pure merit, as she went on to prove on That's Life! and everything else she has created: Childline, The Silver Line."

In 1994, Scudamore was called to the director of television and told that the 21st series would be the last. "We were losing ratings - but then everyone was. And the culture was changing so it was harder to do that mix of items. I was just very sad and I sat with Esther as they broke down the studio for the last time. It was very emotional."

James Hawes, told by Rantzen that he would never become a director, did, with credits including Black Mirror and Slow Horses. He is currently finishing One Life, a movie about Nicholas Winton, with Samantha Spiro as Rantzen. During the research, Hawes talked to his old boss. Did he remind her that she said he'd never direct? "No," he says. "Not yet."

One Life will be released later this year

My best shot

Reiner Riedler

'I found this guy by the pool of the Kremlin Palace hotel in Turkey and asked him to jump. Only later did I realise it represents US power rising above Russia'



This photo is part of my Fake Holidays series. At the beginning of the project, more than 15 years ago, I went to Lara Beach in Antalya, Turkey, where there is one luxury five-star hotel after another, all along the coastline. On the other side of the road were the tents of the workers who had built the hotels. Luxury hotels are like little ghettoes. You take your plane and your taxi, then you are in the middle of an isolated luxury area.

The Kremlin Palace hotel, where this photo was taken, has an exact copy of Saint Basil's Cathedral in Red Square, Moscow. I've been to Moscow and seen the original church - but here in Turkey, there is a swimming pool in front of the cathedral. I was fascinated.

There were many Russian tourists. I saw an astronaut walking around the pool. It turned out the hotel had a huge room with costumes for the entertainers who perform for the tourists. Superman was one of them. I found him by the pool and immediately asked to take his picture. I took about three shots. I chose the photo point, in front of the church with the pool between us, then asked Superman to jump. It was a very childish approach, perhaps, but he did it. The way he jumped was perfect. I felt in the moment: "That's the picture."

It quite often happens that when I take a picture, I know it's strong, but when I go home and look more closely, I understand its more complex meaning. This was one of those times. When I saw the image on my computer screen, I understood what it was about. Here is the No 1 tourist site in Moscow, which stands for the entire history of the Russian empire, and then you have Superman on that famous square, jumping over Saint Basil's Cathedral. It is Superman, representing American power, rising above what represents the Russian empire.

It would have been impossible to take a photo like this in the real Red Square and, now, I think you would end up in prison. In 2006, it was more simply a funny image: the collision of two worlds in one picture. The Crimean crisis happened much later, and we were a long way away from the Ukraine conflict. If I look at the picture now it has a different meaning. I loved the image before, but some images take their time to develop their whole impact.

Fake Holidays was inspired by seeing how many European cities were creating artificial beaches. I first came across one in Hamburg, Germany: they'd put sand on the street and an inflatable swimming pool. I felt immediately transported - touching the sand reminded me of beach holidays as a child. I was fascinated by the idea that we can be easily manipulated by our surroundings. There's a whole industry doing it, like Disney. I took photographs all over Europe, China, the US , Japan … I was fascinated by the facades of happiness.

In my heart, I still feel like a documentary photographer. But things are changing a lot. Last month an AI image won a photo contest. But the beautiful thing with photography is that reality is so strong. If you go out for a walk with a camera, you can't imagine what you will find until you find it.

Interview by Graeme Green. Reiner Riedler's work is part of Civilization: The Way We Live Now at Saatchi Gallery, London, from tomorrow to 17 September

The CV

Born: *Gmunden, Austria, 1968*

Trained: *Die Graphische, Vienna*

Influences: *'Taryn Simon, Paul Graham, Wolfgang Tillmans'*

High point: *'I received a grant for a film project: it marked the beginning of a new creative era. I love new directions that come out of nowhere'*

Low point: *'Being broke and hungry at the beginning of my studies'*

Top tip: *'Photography doesn't have to submit to trends. If a photo is good, it will have lasting relevance'*




Michael Socha as David Hartley, with one of the strange stag men

Review The Gallows Pole, BBC Two

Shane Meadows rewrites the genre in his first historical drama

★★★★★

Lucy Mangan



Benjamin Myers' 2017 novel The Gallows Pole told the true-life tale of the 18th-century gang of coin clippers led by "King" David Hartley, whose illegal work and attendant violence came to dominate Cragg Vale in West Yorkshire. It had formerly been the home of a thriving cottage textiles industry, but the advent of the industrial revolution and the rise of nearby Halifax had left surrounding towns and villages impoverished. In Myers' hands, it is a powerful story of desperation, class warfare and the ability of money to corrupt anyone it touches. Although it must be said that it is so unrelentingly grim and humourless that at times you feel you are moments away from hearing the voice of Jim Broadbent as the pretentious playwright in Victoria Wood's Staying In crying: "The north! My north!"

Shane Meadows's take on the tale keeps all the energy, density and fortitude of the book but adds the missing humour (and women - Myers' book is, quite legitimately but noticeably, all about the men) to give it light and shade. Though it retains the strange "stag men", who roam the moors appearing to people on the edge of consciousness or death, it moves the main figures back to a more ordinary humanity, from Myers' bordering-on-folkloric space. Meadows's talent for naturalism, for showcasing inexperienced as well as experienced actors, for depicting all the fun and sorrow in ordinary lives is normally deployed in the telling of completely contemporary stories. The This is England quartet that made his name was about modern disenfranchisement, and his most recent drama, The Virtues, was about a middle-aged man trying to escape years of childhood trauma. The Gallows Pole is his first period drama, and he seemingly effortlessly reinvents the genre. He doesn't give his characters modern mores - their speech is laced with 18th-century regional terms - but they are not constrained by the conventions we have come to accept as markers of authenticity over the years. The script framework is written by Meadows, but as with all his previous work, the actors have freely improvised and contributed along the way. The effect is wonderful. Every one of them feels fresh and convincing. Real people, just ... in the past.

Meadows is freed somewhat from the heaviness of Myers' take on the counterfeiters' extraordinary story by the fact that his is really more of a prequel to it. His lean, three-part drama concentrates on how the coining gang was put together - and secured the involvement of the local population, which in turn allowed them to proceed. It shows us how they become responsible for introducing so much fake money into the system that they almost collapse the Georgian cash economy.

Hartley (Michael Socha) returns to his village, after a seven-year absence, just in time for his father's funeral and almost in time for his own. He has walked, with a stab wound in his side and trailing a leather sack, all the way from Birmingham, after killing a man. The stag men stalked him across the moors, vouchsafing him a vision of the path his life could take if he manages to survive his injuries.

He pulls through. But then he has to survive his welcome home. Where has he been and what has he been bloody well playing at is the general tenor of it. Especially from Grace (Sophie McShera), the rarely seen embryonic form of the mighty Yorkshire battleaxe, whom David had been courting before he left. He finds the people he left behind, including his brothers Isaac (Samuel Edward Cook), Tom (Dave Perkins) and William (Thomas Turgoose), now being ground under the heel of industrialisation. The work is going to the towns, Grace is helping to run the equivalent of a food bank for the increasingly desperate villagers, but the clothier is still demanding every penny of rent for the spinning wheels now standing hopelessly idle in homes.

David calls a meeting to show his family and friends what he took from the man he killed in Brum: a guinea stamp. Clip a tiny bit of gold from 10 coins, melt the trimmings, create an 11th and banish the threat of starvation, eviction and untimely death from the valley. Who's in?

The roughcast look, feel, performances, wit and earthy intelligence combine to make this a drama of rare quality in every sense. It is funny, moving, enraging, shocking by turns and always compelling. Not to be missed.

Taskmaster
9pm, Channel 4



Filling a pint glass from the furthest distance is the first task in the grand final. Sure, a hose might seem the best option - but you have yet to see what Jenny Eclair can do with a balloon of water and a dart. Next up, a game of copycat chess with Alex Horne - involving Vaseline. And Greg Davies (*above*) announces the winner after a task that sees Frankie Boyle and Ivo Graham sing a lullaby to a nearly dead dog.

Hollie Richardson

Who Do You Think You Are?
9pm, BBC One
Andrew Lloyd Webber is the first curious celebrity to uncover his roots in the return of this hit genealogy series. Desperate to know where his love for music, theatre and performance came from, he is delighted to learn that he is related to Mr Magito - a rope dancer in the 1700s. **HR**

Strike: Inside the Unions
9pm, BBC Two
The second and concluding look at the current wave of strikes follows warehouse staff at Amazon, who held the company's first UK strike in Coventry demanding a pay increase from £10.50 to £15 an hour earlier this year. Then it's over to Pat Cullen, general secretary of the Royal College of Nursing, as she takes on the government. **HR**

Meet the Richardsons
10pm, Dave
The married comedians' meta antics this week involve UKTV asking them to make a special episode. The resulting Halloween extravaganza means an attempt to foist Sarah Greene on them as host, and a far scarier filming experience than they expected. Or as Lucy puts it: "I think we've opened up a portal to Hull!"
Alexi Duggins

Open House: The Great Sex Experiment
10pm, Channel 4
The non-monogamous exploits continue. Tom and his "Tinderella" Kirsty are the latest couple to test the strength of their relationship (and ensure that acquaintances struggle to maintain eye contact in future). With Tom questioning his sexuality, Kirsty embraces her bi-curiosity.
Hannah J Davies

Untold: The Secret War of Boy Racers
11.05pm, Channel 4
Prepare to tut with alacrity as Ben Zand gets to know the UK "car meet" scene - young(ish) men meeting at weekends to drive at irresponsible speed on public highways. Souped-up cars give racers a sense of identity and community, plus an adrenaline hit that's only intensified by the obvious danger.
Jack Seale

What's On
Scan the QR code below to sign up for the What's On newsletter, our free TV email with the best reviews, news and exclusive writing direct to your inbox every Monday

BBC One

6.0 **Breakfast** (T) **9.15** Morning Live (T) **10.0** Rip Off Britain (T) **10.45** Fraud Squad (T) **11.15** Homes Under the Hammer (T) **12.15** Bargain Hunt (T) (R) **1.0** News (T) **1.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **1.45** Doctors (T) **2.15** Money for Nothing (T) **3.0** Escape to the Country (T) (R) **3.45** Garden Rescue (T) **4.30** Clean It, Fix It (T) **5.15** Pointless (T) **6.0** News (T) **6.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **7.0** The One Show (T) **7.30** EastEnders (T)

8.0 **MasterChef** (T) The remaining amateur cooks produce the three courses they hope will secure them the title. Last in the series.
9.0 **Who Do You Think You Are?** (T) New series. Composer Andrew Lloyd Webber uncovers stories from his family history that uncannily parallel his own life.

10.0 **News** (T)
10.30 **Regional News** (T) Weather
10.40 **Question Time** (T) Fiona Bruce chairs the topical debate in Leicester.
11.40 FILM **King of Thieves** (James Marsh, 2018) (T) Crime drama based on the Hatton Garden heist, starring Michael Caine.
1.20 **Weather** (T) **1.25** News (T)

BBC Two

6.0 **Great Coastal Railway Journeys** (T) (R) **6.30** Garden Rescue (T) (R) **7.15** Clean It, Fix It (T) (R) **8.0** Sign Zone: A Special School (T) (R) **8.30** Caught Red Handed (T) (R) **9.0** Nicky Campbell (T) **11.0** News (T) **1.0** Impossible (T) (R) **1.45** Eggheads (T) (R) **2.15** Food Map of Britain (T) (R) **2.45** A Countryside Summer (T) (R) **3.15** What Britain Buys and Sells in a Day (T) (R) **4.15** Back in Time (T) (R) **5.15** Flog It! (T) (R) **6.0** House of Games (T) (R) **6.30** Great Coastal Railway Journeys (T) **7.0** Today at the Test (T)

8.0 **Springwatch** (T) Iolo Williams sets sail into Poole Harbour with the aim of seeing a white-tailed eagle or an osprey.
9.0 **Strike: Inside the Unions** (T) Part two of two. Charting the start of the 2022 strikes, which saw the most days lost to strike action since the Thatcher era.

10.0 **Inside No 9** (T) (R)
10.30 **Newsnight** (T) Weather
11.15 **Forensics: The Real CSI** (T) (R) West Midlands Police work to identify the cause of a major fire in Birmingham.
12.15 **Sign Zone** Dr Xand's Con Or Cure (T) (R) **1.0** Strike (T) (R) **2.0** Frontline Fightback (T) (R) **2.45** Iolo's Borderlands (T) **3.15** This Is BBC Two (T)

ITV1

6.0 **Good Morning Britain** (T) **9.0** Lorraine (T) **10.0** This Morning (T) **12.30** Loose Women (T) **1.30** News and Weather (T) **1.55** Local News and Weather (T) **2.0** Dickinson's Real Deal (T) (R) **3.0** Tenable (T) (R) **4.0** Tipping Point (T) **5.0** The Chase (T) **6.0** Local News and Weather (T) **6.30** News and Weather (T) **7.0** Emmerdale (T) **7.30** Coronation Street (T)

8.0 **Britain's Got Talent** (T) Ant and Dec host another semi-final in the nationwide talent search, judged by Bruno Tonioli, Simon Cowell, Amanda Holden and Alesha Dixon.

10.0 **News** (T) Weather
10.30 **Local News** (T) Weather
10.45 **Our House** (T) (R) Fi is left reeling by Bram's apparent involvement in the house sale.
11.40 **All Elite Wrestling** (T)
12.35 **Shop: Ideal World** **3.0** Made in Britain (T) (R) **3.50** Unwind With ITV (T) **5.05** Family Fortunes (T) (R)

Channel 4

6.05 **Countdown** (T) (R) **6.45** Cheers (T) (R) **7.35** The King of Queens (T) (R) **8.25** Frasier (T) (R) **9.55** Find It, Fix It, Flog It (T) (R) **10.55** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **11.55** News (T) **12.0** Steph's Packed Lunch (T) **2.10** Countdown (T) **3.0** A Place in the Sun (T) (R) **4.0** The Great House Giveaway (T) (R) **5.0** Sarah Beeny's New Country Lives (T) **6.0** The Simpsons (T) (R) **6.30** Hollyoaks (T) (R) **7.0** News (T)

8.0 **24 Hours in A&E** (T) (R) A man is rushed in after his fourth seizure of the day.
9.0 **Taskmaster** (T) The contenders contemplate using a hose, create something soothing for two very specific professions and have an intense game of face-changing chess with Alex. Last in the series.

10.0 **Open House: The Great Sex Experiment** (T)
11.05 **Untold: The Secret War of Boy Racers** (T)
11.40 **Naked Attraction's Best Naughty Bits** (T) (R)
12.35 **Gender Wars** (T) (R) **1.25** 60 Days on the Estates (T) (R) **2.20** Kids (T) (R) **3.10** Grand Designs (T) (R) **4.0** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R)

Channel 5

6.0 **Milkshake!** **9.15** Jeremy Vine (T) **11.15** Storm Huntley (T) **12.15** Alexis Conran (T) **1.40** News (T) **1.45** Home and Away (T) (R) **2.15** FILM Cut, Colour, Murder (Stacey N Harding, 2022) (T) **4.0** Paul Martin's Antiques Showdown (T) **5.0** News (T) **6.0** Eggheads (T) (R) **7.0** The Cotswolds & Beyond With Pam Ayres (T) (R)

8.0 **Bargain Loving Brits By the Sea** (T) Cameras follow puppet enthusiast and Blackpool B&B owner Martin Scott Price.
9.0 **Alexander Armstrong in Sri Lanka** (T) On the last leg of his journey around the island, the presenter moves north into Tamil country. Last in the series.

10.0 **Killer at the Crime Scene** (T) (R) Last in the series.
11.05 **Police: Suspect No 1** (T) (R)
12.05 **Police Interceptors** (T) (R) **1.0** Teleshopping (T) **3.0** Walking Britain's Lost Railways (T) (R) **3.50** GPs: Behind Closed Doors (T) (R) **4.40** Wildlife SOS (T) (R) **5.05** House Doctor (T) (R) **5.35** Fireman Sam (T) (R)

BBC Four

7.0 **The Pennine Way** (T) (R) Paul Rose visits an archaeological dig in Northumberland. **7.30** Fred Dibnah's Building of Britain (T) (R) The creation of Britain's canals.

8.0 **A House Through Time** (T) (R) David Olusoga explores the house's history from the 1880s to the first world war, discovering how the battle of Passchendaele changed the residents' lives for ever.
9.0 FILM **Casablanca** (Michael Curtiz, 1942) (T) Romantic drama, starring Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman.

10.40 **Imagine: Ingrid Bergman in Her Own Words** (T) (R) A profile of the Oscar-winning actor, from her days as a Swedish schoolgirl to becoming a Hollywood star.
12.20 **Expedition Volcano** (T) (R) **1.20** The Pennine Way (T) (R) **1.50** Building of Britain (T) (R) **2.20** A House Through Time (T) (R)

Other channels

BBC Three

7.0pm Top Gear **8.0** MOTDx **8.30** Sky High Club: Scotland and Beyond **9.0** Bad Education **9.30** Bad Education **10.0** Black Ops **10.25** Famalam **10.50** Famalam **11.10** Brickies **11.40** Brickies **12.10** Top Gear **1.10** Famalam **1.35** Famalam **1.55** Brickies **2.25** Brickies **2.55** Bad Education **3.25** Bad Education

Dave

6.0am Teleshopping **7.10** Secrets of the Supercars **8.0** Special Ops: Crime Squad UK **9.0** Cop Car Workshop **10.0** Survivor Australia **11.30** Rick Stein's French Odyssey **12.0** The Force: Behind the Line **12.30** The Force: Behind the Line **1.0** Border Force: America's Gatekeepers **2.0** Top Gear **3.0** Top Gear **4.0** David Jason: Planes, Trains and Automobiles **5.0** Rick Stein's Secret France **6.0** Taskmaster **7.0** Richard Osman's House of Games **7.40** Richard Osman's House of Games **8.20** Room 101 **9.0** Live at the Apollo **10.0** Meet the Richardsons **10.40** Mock the Week **11.20** Mock the Week **12.0** Mock the Week **12.40** QI **1.20** Taskmaster **2.30** Richard Osman's House of Games **3.0** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **3.25** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **4.0** Teleshopping

E4

6.0am Hollyoaks **6.30** Hollyoaks **7.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **9.0** The Neighborhood **10.0** The Big Bang Theory **11.0** Modern Family **12.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **1.0** The Big Bang Theory **3.0** Modern Family **3.30** Modern Family **4.0** Young Sheldon **4.30** Young Sheldon **5.0** The Big Bang Theory **5.30** The Big Bang Theory **6.0** The Big Bang Theory **6.30** The Big Bang Theory **7.0** Hollyoaks **7.30** The Big Bang Theory **8.0** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **9.0** Gogglebox **10.0** Naked Attraction **11.05** Impractical Jokers **11.40** Impractical Jokers **12.05** Gogglebox **1.15** Rick and Morty **1.50** Royal Crackers **2.15** Naked Attraction **3.10** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **3.55** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **4.50** The Neighborhood **5.15** The Neighborhood

Film4

11.0am FILM The Red Pony (1949) **12.50** FILM Shenandoah (1965) **3.0** FILM Captain Scarlett (1953) **4.35** FILM An Affair to Remember (1957) **6.50** FILM Sister Act 2: Back in the Habit (1993) **9.0** FILM Commando (1985) **10.50** FILM The Worst Person in the World (2021) **1.25** FILM Thelma (2017)

ITV2

6.0am World's Funniest Videos **6.35** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **7.0** Dress to Impress **8.0** One Tree Hill **9.0** Dawson's Creek **10.0** Love Bites **11.0** Dress to Impress **12.0** Britain's Got Talent **2.0** Chuck **3.05** One Tree Hill **4.0** Dawson's Creek **5.0** Celebrity Dinner Date **6.0** Celebrity Catchphrase **7.0** Superstore **7.30** Superstore **8.0** Bob's Burgers **8.30** Bob's Burgers **9.0** Gordon, Gino and Fred: European Road Trip **10.0** Family Guy **10.30** Family Guy **11.0** Family Guy **11.30** American Dad! **11.55** American Dad! **12.25** Bob's Burgers **12.55** Bob's Burgers **1.25** Superstore **1.50** Superstore **2.20** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.45** Unwind With ITV **3.0** Teleshopping

Sky Max

6.0am Stop, Search, Seize **8.0** Supergirl **9.0** Quantum Leap **10.0** The Flash **11.0** NCIS: New Orleans **1.0** Hawaii Five-0 **2.0** MacGyver **3.0** Quantum Leap **4.0** Supergirl **5.0** The Flash **6.0** Stop, Search, Seize **8.0** Football's Funniest Moments **8.30** Enter the Spider-Verse: A Spider-Man Special **9.0** Last King of the Cross **10.15** Fantasy Island **11.15** The Force: Manchester **12.15** NCIS: Los Angeles **1.10** Road Wars **3.0** Hawaii Five-0 **4.0** MacGyver **5.0** Highway Patrol

Sky Arts

6.0am André Rieu: Welcome to My World **7.0** André Rieu: Roses from the South **9.0** Tales of the Unexpected **10.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **11.0** Discovering: William Holden **12.0** Raphael: Revealed **1.0** Tales of the Unexpected **2.0** Art Traffickers: Treasures Stolen from the Tombs **3.0** The Directors **4.0** Discovering: Barbara Stanwyck **5.0** Tales of the Unexpected **6.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **6.30** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **7.0** Discovering: Natalie Wood **8.0** Landscape Artist of the Year: Celebrity Special **9.0** The Directors **10.0** Bafta: Life in Pictures **11.0** The Sixties **12.0** Peter Frampton: FCA! 35 Tour **2.0** Discovering: David Bowie **3.0** I Hate Jane Austen By Giles Coren **4.0** Auction **4.30** Video Killed the Radio Star **5.0** Video Killed the Radio Star **5.30** Video Killed the Radio Star

Sky Atlantic

6.0am Richard E Grant's Hotel Secrets **7.55** Big Love **10.05** True Blood **12.15** Game of Thrones **1.20** Ray Donovan **3.30** Big Love **5.45** True Blood **7.55** Game of Thrones **9.0** Billions **11.10** Gangs of London **12.20** In Treatment **12.50** The Night Of **2.0** Big Love **3.05** Game of Thrones **4.05** Richard E Grant's Hotel Secrets


Casablanca, BBC Four

Radio

Radio 3

6.30am Breakfast **9.0** Essential Classics **12.0** Composer of the Week: Domenico Scarlatti (4/5) **1.0** Lunchtime Concert. Pianist Charles Owen play Schubert, Liszt and Franck at the Hay festival. (3/4) **2.0** Afternoon Concert. The Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra perform Rachmaninov. Plus, Renaissance madrigals from La Compagnia del Madrigale. **5.0** In Tune **7.0** Classical Mixtape **7.30** In Concert. Live from St David's Hall in Cardiff, Ryan Bancroft conducts the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, violist Rebecca Jones and cellist Alice Neary in Grace Williams's Concert Overture, Mozart's Symphony No 39 in E flat, K543, and R Strauss's Don Quixote, Op 35. **10.0** Free Thinking **10.45** The Essay: Charles Aznavour in Five Songs. Paul French on The Old Fashioned Way. (4/5) **11.0** The Night Tracks Mix **11.30** Unclassified **12.30** Through the Night

Radio 4

6.0am Today **9.0** In Our Time **9.45** (LW) Daily Service **9.45** (FM) Book of the Week: Pathogenesis – How Germs Made History (4/5) **10.0** Woman's Hour **10.25** (LW) TMS: England v Ireland – Day One **11.0** (FM) From Our Own Correspondent (2/9) **11.30** (FM) Great Lives (R) **12.0** (FM) News **12.01** (LW) Shipping Forecast **12.04** (LW) TMS: England v Ireland **12.04** (FM) You and Yours **12.30** (FM) Sliced Bread (4/10) **12.57** (FM) Weather **1.0** (FM) The World at One **1.45** (FM) Oliver Burkeman's Inconvenient Truth (4/5) **2.0** (FM) The Archer (R) **2.15** (FM) Undercover Mumbai. Crime drama, by Ayeesha Menon. (3/3) (R) **3.0** (FM) Ramblings. Clare Balding meets two brothers at Burton Bradstock on the Dorset coast. (3/7) **3.27** (FM) Radio 4 Appeal (R) **3.30** (FM) Open Book (R) **4.0** (FM) Princess. The Mesopatamian princess Enheduanna. (9/10) **4.30** (FM) Inside Science **5.0** (FM) PM **5.54** (LW) Shipping Forecast **5.57** (LW) TMS **5.57** (FM) Weather **6.0** (FM) News **6.30** (FM) Unite. Comedy, starring Claire Skinner and Mark Steel. (1/6) **7.0** The Archers **7.15** Front Row **8.0** Law in Action (R) **8.30** The Patch. A random visit to Bolton. (R) **9.0** Inside Science (R) **9.30** In Our Time **9.59** Weather **10.0** The World Tonight **10.45** Book at Bedtime: The House of Doors (4/10) **11.0** Rylan: How to Be a Man. With guest comedian Phil Wang. (3/10) **11.30** The Spark (R) **12.0** News and Weather **12.30** Book of the Week: Pathogenesis – How Germs Made History (4/5) **12.48** Shipping Forecast **1.0** As World Service **5.20** Shipping Forecast **5.30** News Briefing **5.43** Prayer for the Day **5.45** Farming Today **5.58** Tweet of the Day

Radio 4 Extra

6.0am The Events at Black Tor (4/6) **6.30** A Charles Paris Mystery: A Reconstructed Corpse (3/4) **7.0** One Two Three Four: The Beatles in Time (4/5) **7.15** The Citadel (4/5) **7.30** On the Rocks (2/4) **8.0** The Burkiss Way **8.30** Kalangadog Junction (1/6) **9.0** Jest a Minute (1/6) **9.30** Clare in the Community (4/6) **10.0** Lennon: A Week in the Life **10.45** A Point of View **11.0** The Events at Black Tor (4/6) **11.30** A Charles Paris Mystery (3/4) **12.0** One Two Three Four: The Beatles in Time (4/5) **12.15** The Citadel (4/5) **12.30** On the Rocks (2/4) **1.0** The Burkiss Way **1.30** Kalangadog Junction (1/6) **2.0** Jest a Minute (1/6) **2.30** Clare in the Community (4/6) **3.0** **3.45** A Point of View **4.0** The Events at Black Tor (4/6) **4.30** A Charles Paris Mystery (3/4) **5.0** One Two Three Four (4/5) **5.15** The Citadel (4/5) **5.30** On the Rocks (2/4) **6.0** The Burkiss Way **6.30** Kalangadog Junction (1/6) **7.0** Jest a Minute (1/6) **7.30** Clare in the Community (4/6) **8.0** Tears of a Clown: Kissinger's Century **9.0** Frankly Speaking **9.30** Across the Narrow Water (1/2) **10.0** It's a Fair Cop (4/4) **10.30** Tom Wrigglesworth's Hang-Ups (3/4) **11.0** Ida Barr: Artificial Hip Hop (3/4) **11.15** Political Animals (2/4) **11.30** Rigor Mortis (4/6) **12.0** Lennon **12.45** A Point of View **1.0** The Events at Black Tor (4/6) **1.30** A Charles Paris Mystery (3/4) **2.0** One Two Three Four (4/5) **2.15** The Citadel (4/5) **2.30** On the Rocks (2/4) **3.0** The Burkiss Way **3.30** Kalangadog Junction (1/6) **4.0** Jest a Minute (1/6) **4.30** Clare in the Community (4/6) **5.0** The Believers

Puzzles

Yesterday's solutions

Wordsearch

L	Y	M	D	Y	D	F	F	E
I	V	P	S	A	E	J	N	Z
L	T	I	P	R	H	I	T	L
Y	A	H	N	O	M	L	R	E
D	N	C	C	S	P	C	I	Z
E	H	E	A	T	H	E	R	A
N	A	J	H	E	O	T	P	H
T	E	L	O	I	V	A	R	A
E	S	N	L	M	N	I	S	O
T	O	E	L	S	C	D	L	R
A	R	N	Y	S	I	R	I	O

Solution no 16,557

H	E	R	E	D	I	T	Y		I	V	E	S
O		O		I		U		N		O		T
C	R	A	S	S		A	S	U	N	D	E	R
K		D		E		R		T		K		I
	C	H	I	M	N	E	Y	S	T	A	C	K
T		O		B		G		A				I
A	E	G	E	A	N		U	N	E	V	E	N
P				R		S		D		U		G
W	R	E	C	K	I	N	G	B	A	L	L	
A		N		I		E		O		G		T
T	R	A	I	N	E	E		L	O	A	T	H
E		C		G		Z		T		T		O
R	I	T	E		M	E	N	S	W	E	A	R

Sudoku no 6,081

5	9	4	1	3	6	8	2	7
8	1	3	5	7	2	4	9	6
6	2	7	4	8	9	3	1	5
1	8	5	7	2	4	9	6	3
9	7	6	3	5	1	2	8	4
3	4	2	9	6	8	7	5	1
2	5	9	6	4	7	1	3	8
4	3	8	2	1	5	6	7	9
7	6	1	8	9	3	5	4	2

Word wheel

TYPICALLY

Suguru

1	2	4	1	3	5
4	3	5	2	4	1
2	1	4	1	5	3
4	5	2	3	4	2
1	3	1	5	1	3
2	5	2	3	4	2

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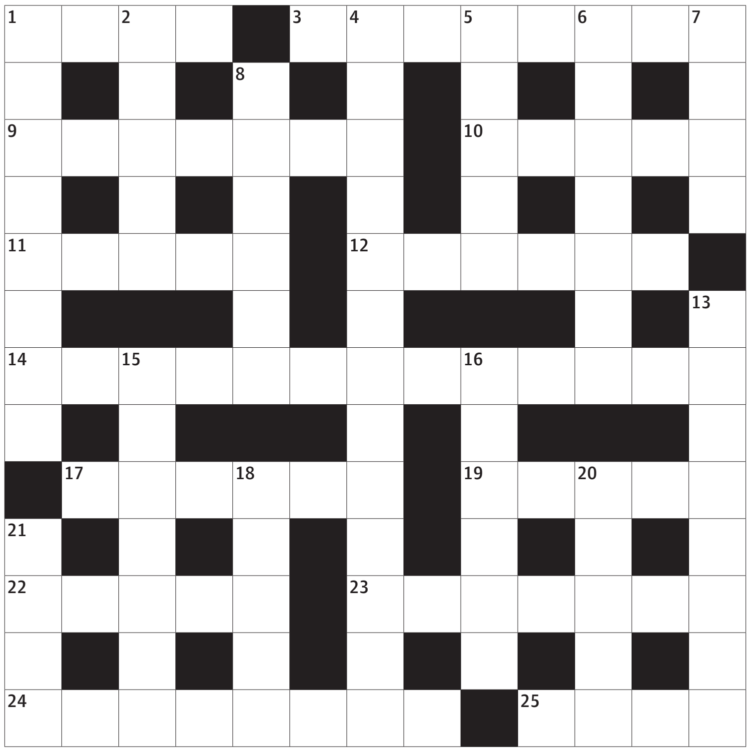
Quick crossword no 16,558

Across

1 Drink through a straw? (4)
3 Chinese dish – we con him (anag) (4,4)
9 Her tale (anag) (7)
10 Coloured flower leaf (5)
11 Years of adolescence? (5)
12 Making mistakes (6)
14 Get to the central point (3,2,3,5)
17 Sign of the Bull (6)
19 Soviet prison camp for political prisoners (5)
22 Post-adolescent (5)
23 Ancient Assyrian city (7)
24 Upper canine (3,5)
25 Food shop (4)

Down

1 Time in June and December when the sun is at its greatest distance from the celestial equator (8)
2 Bird (which is regularly seen on a building site?) (5)
4 Conker tree (5,8)
5 Windscreen cleaner? (5)
6 Baltic country (7)
7 Africa's longest river (4)
8 Treatment using exercise and massage (abbr) (6)
13 Effects to be considered in placing buildings, graves or furniture – fine hugs (anag) (4,4)
15 Badmouth (7)
16 Convincing (6)
18 Fashion reminiscent of the past (5)
20 River embankment (5)
21 Kind of door lock (4)



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Sudoku no 6,082

Hard. Fill the grid so that each row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9. Printable version at theguardian.com/sudoku

	1				3		6	7
			8	7		2		
		3			6		5	
		5				9		4
	9		1		7	6		8
		1		6	9			
	6		2					
	3			4	1			

Suguru

Fill the grid so that each square in an outlined block contains a digit. A block of two squares contains the digits 1 and 2, a block of three squares contains the digits 1, 2 and 3, and so on. No same digit appears in neighbouring squares, not even diagonally.

4					3
		3	2	4	1
					2
3					2

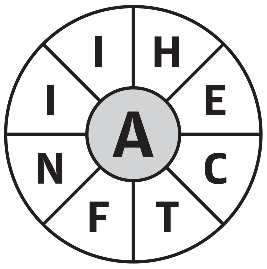
Wordsearch

Can you find 15 wobbly words in the grid? Words can run forwards, backwards, vertically or diagonally, but always in a straight, unbroken line.

R	E	T	T	O	T	H	T	W
I	R	E	V	A	W	A	E	I
S	F	L	I	M	S	Y	E	N
T	E	R	O	C	K	Y	T	R
U	S	A	H	A	N	R	E	E
M	O	I	H	E	I	D	R	L
B	O	S	E	C	D	A	L	B
L	L	R	K	O	N	S	O	M
E	A	E	D	I	Z	Z	Y	E
C	T	E	F	A	S	N	U	R
Y	U	N	E	V	E	N	C	T

Word wheel

Find as many words as possible using the letters in the wheel. Each must use the central letter and at least two others. Letters may be used only once. You may not use plurals, foreign words or proper nouns. There is at least one nine-letter word to be found. TARGET: Excellent-42. Good-35. Average-26.



Trivia corner

How many times has Kieran Culkin been nominated for a Golden Globe for best supporting actor for his work on Succession?
a. Never
b. Once
c. Twice
d. Three times
Answer top right

